"The Shepherd King"

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TO BE PRODUCED BY WRIGHT LORIMER AT THE NEW YORK THEATRE

A Romantic Drama

IN FOUR ACTS AND FIVE SCENES

BY

ARNOLD REEVES

AND

WRIGHT LORIMER

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"THE SHEPHERD KING"

A Romantic Drama in Four Acts and Five Scenes

By

ARNOLD REEVES and WRIGHT LORIMER

Cast of Characters

Saul.....King of Israel
Jonathan.....His Son
Doeg.....An Edomite
Omar.....His Brother
Jesse.....Father of David
Abinadab, Shammah, Eliah, Ozem.....David's Elder Brothers
Ahimelech.....A Priest
Goliath.....A Giant
Merab, Michal.....Saul's Daughters
Mother of David
Adora.....A Bondmaid
Witch of Endor

AND

DAVID, The Shepherd Boy, who afterward becomes King
Captain Tamar, High Priest, Armor-Bearer, Heralds, Soldiers, Singers, Dancing Girls, Nubians and Slaves

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SYNOPSIS

ACT FIRST. Jesse's home—Bethlehem.
ACT SECOND. Saul's camp—Vale of Elah.
ACT THIRD. Saul's palace—Gibeah.
ACT FOURTH. Scene 1. Cave of Witch of Endor. Scene 2. Court, adjoining the Palace.

CHARACTERS USED IN THE FIRST ACT.

Jesse.....Father of David

Ahimelech.....A Priest

Jonathan.....Saul's Son

Prince Phalti.....A Nobleman

Ozem.....David's Brother

Mother.....Of David

Michal.....Saul's Younger Daughter

Adora.....Bondmaid

AND

David.....The "Shepherd Boy"

SCENE: Jesse's Home in Bethlehem.

"THE SHEPHERD KING"

ACT FIRST.

Home of Jesse, at Bethlehem. House on the R., barn L. Back drop represents hilly-farm lands. A rustic seat is R. C. Table and chairs L. Jesse's weaver's loom R. 2. Implements scattered to dress stage. Time: Late afternoon changing to sunset.

JESSE and ADORA discovered working at loom.

JESSE.

There, that will do, Adora; thou hast worked long and must be tired. Rest thyself.

ADORA.

Nay, I am not tired, master Jesse.

JESSE.

Why dost thou persist in calling me master, child? This is thy home; thou hast been faithful; we hold thee as one of ourselves.

ADORA.

Thou hast been kind to an orphan. I love all thy house, good master.

JESSE.

So we would have thee. Thou art our bond-woman by the law, but thy bonds are not fetters.

MOTHER (*Of* DAVID).

(*Enters from house.*) Hast not finished thy work, Jesse?

JESSE.

Aye, for the day, mother.

MOTHER.

Adora, wilt go to the well? (*X'ing up and looking off* L.)

JESSE.

(*To* ADORA.) Gather up the cloth, and take it with thee to the house, Adora.

ADORA.

(*Gathers up the work, starts to exit in house.*)

JESSE.

For whom art thou looking, mother?

MOTHER.

For David.

JESSE.

Is it not yet early?

ADORA.

(*At door.*) True, only when the sun hath reached the summit of the high hill, doth David gather his sheep about him, to return home. (*Exit.*)

JESSE.

The little maiden is right, mother (OZEM *enters from* L.). Ah, Ozem, hast finished thy day's labor?

OZEM.

Yes, father; the wheat is all stacked.

ADORA.

(*Enters from house with vessel to get water. X's up to* C.—*is met by* OZEM.)

OZEM.

Thou art going to the well; I will go with thee, Adora.

ADORA.

Thou art kind. (*They exit,* C. *to* R.)

JESSE.

Dost thou see, mother, it is Adora that brings our son home so promptly.

MOTHER.

Adora is a worthy child. Ozem might seek long and not find her equal.

JESSE.

True, mother, I would welcome her as a daughter-in-law.

MOTHER.

Soon we shall be left alone, dear husband. Our three eldest sons serve the King—two others live apart from us. Now, Ozem will be taking a wife. David alone, remains.

JESSE.

Thy favorite, mother.

MOTHER.

Not that I love the others less, Jesse. But a mother's love is always stronger for her youngest.

JESSE.

And in David, the Lord hath blessed us. Well named "David," The beloved. Come, mother, I will assist thee with the supper (*putting arm about her*). Thou hast been wife and companion for nigh two score years and ten, years that thy love hath made to seem like a few days. Contentment hath been ours. Our few sorrows have but

mellowed our love, which spreads itself over the children that have blessed us. Come, dear (*exits in house*); come.

(ADORA *and* OZEM *enter.*)

ADORA.

Nay, Ozem; I must not listen to thee.

OZEM.

Let me plead with thee, Adora. Thou dost not know how much I love thee.

ADORA.

I do know, Ozem; thou hast always been kind.

OZEM.

Why, then, wilt thou not let me speak?

ADORA.

No, Ozem; NO!

OZEM.

I want thee for my wife.

ADORA.

That cannot be. I am but a bond-woman to thy father.

OZEM.

That doth make no difference; my mother and father love thee, and would be glad to have thee for their daughter.

ADORA.

Ozem, I love thee as a brother. Thou hast always been kind and thoughtful. Do not think me ungrateful, only I do not feel for thee the love I should, to become thy wife.

OZEM.

That will come later, Adora.

ADORA.

Nay, Ozem; speak no more of love to me. I cannot bear it.

OZEM.

Dost thou love another?

ADORA.

(*Slight catch of breath—starts to exit.*)

OZEM.

Stay; answer me!

ADORA.

Nay, Ozem; no other hath ever spoken words of love to me—I—I—— (*Bursts into tears.*)

OZEM.

Tears! Adora——

ADORA.

It is nothing—I—I am foolish, that is all.

MOTHER.

(*Calls from house.*) Adora! Adora!

ADORA.

There, thy mother is calling. (*Picks up water-bottle; starts to go—turns.*) Ozem, forgive me if I seem cruel.

OZEM.

Say I may hope?

ADORA.

Nay, Ozem; I cannot.

OZEM.

(*Turns surlily away.*)

ADORA.

(*Gives slight sigh; starts for house.*)

JESSE.

(*Enters and meets her at door-way.*) Didst lose thy way? I fear Ozem was more of a hindrance than help to thee.

ADORA.

(*Raises her head to speak.*)

JESSE.

(*Glances at her, then at* OZEM; *hand on her head.*) Why, thy face is full of sorrow, child; I did not mean to chide thee. There! (*Gently pushes her in house.*)

OZEM.

(OZEM *is standing gloomily over* L.)

JESSE.

Ozem, hast thou quarreled with Adora?

OZEM.

Nay, father.

JESSE.

Her face was full of grief.

OZEM.

I asked her to be my wife, and—and—she would not listen to me.

JESSE.

Thou may'st have been too hasty. Love is a delicate flower; the seed must fall on favored soil; fostered with care and kindness, it gathers strength. It withers if plucked before the buds have spread. Have patience, my son.

OZEM.

'Tis not that I have been forward, father. Adora has known my feelings many days.

JESSE.

And would not heed thy suit?

OZEM.

She said that she could never be my wife.

JESSE.

Because she did not love thee?

OZEM.

Yes; I fear she loves another. (*X'ing up* C.)

JESSE.

Nay, that cannot be. None other hath shown her attention; of that I am sure. I will speak with her.

OZEM.

It will be useless. (*Looking off* L.)

JESSE.

I hope not; the maiden would be a credit to thee. Ahimelech! Go thou and greet him.

OZEM.

(*Exits* C. L.)

JESSE.

(*Calls in house.*) Mother!

MOTHER.

(*Enters.*)

JESSE.

The holy-man, Ahimelech, is coming. (*X'ing* L.)

MOTHER.

He is probably journeying from Saul's camp.

(*Enter from* C. L. OZEM *and* AHIMELECH. OZEM *retires up back.* MOTHER *exits in house.*)

AHIMELECH.

Peace be to thee and thy household, Jesse.

JESSE.

And to thee. How fares it with our king?

AHIMELECH.

Badly. The spirit of evil rests upon him. The army hath grown discontented. There is no hope for Israel under Saul's reign.

JESSE.

And are we then to fall under the power of our ancient enemy, the Philistines?

AHIMELECH.

Fear not, Jehovah hath declared through our holy prophet, Samuel, that Saul's crown shall be taken from him, and that another will lead Israel to victory.

JESSE.

Another will reign—Prince Jonathan?

AHIMELECH.

I would it might be so. Prince Jonathan is a valiant man—beloved by the people, and while the gloom hath o'ershadowed the mind of Saul, Jonathan's hand hath guided the King's sceptre. But none of Saul's blood shall ever again reign over Israel. Another hath been chosen, and but awaits the sign to ascend the throne.

MOTHER.

(*Enters from house.*)

JESSE.

And this other is?

AHIMELECH.

No one knows, except the prophet, Samuel, who says he is a Bethlehemite, and of humble parentage.

MOTHER.

Bring you any news of our sons? (*To* AHIMELECH.)

AHIMELECH.

Thou hast sons with Saul? (*To* MOTHER.)

JESSE.

Our three eldest, Eliah, Abinadab and Shammah.

AHIMELECH.

The Lord hath blessed thee, Jesse.

MOTHER.

(*To* AHIMELECH.) If thou wilt enter and refresh thyself, the table is spread.

AHIMELECH.

Peace to thy house. (*Bus. and exits in house, led by servants.* MOTHER *about to follow.*)

DAVID.

(*Is heard singing in the distance.*)

MOTHER.

'Tis David! (*Aside.*)

ADORA.

(*Enters from back of house. Goes to* C. L. *Looks off* L.)

JESSE.

Mother, thy son, David, is coming. (*To* ADORA.) Thou wert right, Adora; the sun's shadow is creeping down the hill, and David comes.

MOTHER.

And hath he his flock with him?

JESSE.

Aye, and following him as men follow their King.

ADORA.

They all know and love him, good master.

OZEM.

Thy admiration couldn't be greater were he indeed a King.

JESSE.

Ozem, if thou canst not speak with gentleness, seal thy lips.

DAVID.

(*Song increases.*)

MOTHER.

Thou knowest, Ozem, our admiration is no greater for David than 'tis for thee.

DAVID.

(*Is seen leading sheep down run from* L. *When* C., *stops. Has wounded lamb on his shoulder.*)

JESSE.

Thou seest, David, that we were expecting thee.

DAVID.

Aye, father; a welcome home is what I am always assured of. (*X'ing to* MOTHER. *Throws arms about her neck, kisses her.*) There, little mother, is my welcome to thee. (*To* OZEM.) Brother, thou art home before me.

ADORA.

(*Comes to his* R. *Takes crook from his hand.*) David, there's blood on thy arm!

JESSE.

(*Dropping down stage.*) What sayst thou?

MOTHER.

Thou art hurt, my son?

(*Together.*

DAVID.

(*Laughs.*) Nay, 'tis nothing. Thy eyes are sharp, Adora; a scratch, that is all. But 'tis more with this little fellow, here. Bring me a basin of warm water and some old linen, Adora, for I fear his leg is broken. (*X's to bench* R.)

ADORA.

(*Exits in house.*)

JESSE.

(*X'ing to* OZEM.) Lend thy aid, Ozem, and we will return this loom to the barn. (*They do so.*)

MOTHER.

How did it happen, David? (*Just back of* DAVID.)

ADORA.

(*Returns with basin and some linen strips for bandage. Kneels at his* R.; *assists him, handing the linen, etc., her attention concentrated upon* DAVID.)

DAVID.

I will tell thee: This lamb that the winter storms made motherless, has been my special pet. I have been his sole parent. I call him Boaz. I have a name for each of my flock, is it not so, Adora? (*She nods.*) That small piece, Adora (*taking a strip of linen from her*). To-day in his gambols he grew bold, and ran away. I called to him, but he heeded not. There! (*Fixing business.*) I gave chase, but he thought it was play and scampered all the faster from me. I did my best to overtake him, but he soon reached the break of the hill. He realized his danger, and braced himself, but the loose earth gave way and over he went—— Now to make this fast (*tying bandage*)—— I feared that he was killed. I descended after him. As I neared the bottom, a rock that I was clinging to, gave.

That is how I came by the scratch. I found Boaz, and brought him up. And now that we have patched him, he will soon be well, and wiser than ever. There! Now, Adora, if thou wilt feed him a little warm milk. (*Places lamb in* Adora's *arms.*)

ADORA.
(*Starts to exit in house.*)

AHIMELECH.
(*Enters from house.*)

JESSE.
(*Enters from barn.*)

MOTHER.

Simultaneous.

(*To* Ahim.) Oh, good sir; your pardon. I have allowed myself to forget hospitality.

AHIMELECH.

(*Coming* C.) Nay, not so. Thy hospitality is bountiful. I am refreshed. This is thy son?

Positions: Ahem., C.; Mother, R. 2; David, R. *of* C.; Jesse, L.

MOTHER.

Aye, good sir; my son, David.

DAVID.

(*Kneels before* Ahim.)

AHIMELECH.

(*Blessing* David.) May the Lord bless thee, my son, and make thee an honor to thy parents.

DAVID.

I thank thee.

AHIMELECH.

Thy name is not a stranger to me, David. From many have I heard of thy gift of song, and of thy power upon the harp. Aye, even in our school of the prophets, hath thy name been mentioned.

JESSE.

'Tis an honor, son. (*To* AHEM.) When the holy prophet, Samuel, journeyed through Bethlehem, he did remark and show special favor to our son for his ability.

DAVID.

Would that I could turn it to benefit our nation.

AHIMELECH.

When Jehovah bestows great gifts or virtues upon a man, 'tis for a purpose. Keep thy heart clean, my son; thy day will come.

MOTHER.

Thou art not thinking of leaving us, David?

DAVID.

Leaving thee, mother; why dost thou think that?

JESSE.

Thy words, son, have aroused fear in thy mother, that thou hast grown discontented with thy shepherd life.

DAVID.

Banish thy fear, dear mother—if my duty lies upon the hills to watch and care for our flocks—cheerfully will I do my work, with no thought of discontent.

AHIMELECH.

Thou need'st not fear for thy son, good mother. He speaks manfully and from the heart. It is from such as he that the future salvation of our nation is to come. Israel

to-day is stagnant, the blood that rules us is corrupt. Of all the royal court Jonathan alone retains the confidence and admiration of the people.

DAVID.

Prince Jonathan! Our noble prince. How I have gloried in his deeds!

AHIMELECH.

And well thou may'st, as should all the youths of Israel. (*Starts to go.*) But I must leave thee. Farewell.

JESSE.

Wilt thou not abide the night and rest thyself?

AHIMELECH.

Nay, I am a bearer of messages from the camp of Saul to the prophet Samuel, and must continue my journey.

JESSE.

I will accompany thee to the road. (*Exeunts to* L.)

(*As* AHIMELECH *and* JESSE *exit,* DAVID *X's to seat* R., *sits with hands folded behind his head.* MOTHER *X's up and watches* AHIMELECH *and* JESSE *off.* ADORA *comes to door. Picture for second.* MOTHER *comes behind* DAVID, *kisses him on brow.* ADORA *X's up to* L. C., *looking off, later watches* DAVID.

MOTHER.

(*After bus.*) Of what art thou thinking, my son?

DAVID.

Picture thoughts, mother.

MOTHER.

Thoughts that would take thee from me, David?

DAVID.

Nay, mother, only the thoughts that come from the words of the priest. I was thinking that beyond those hills, where I so peacefully tend my sheep, lies the world of action.

MOTHER.

And woulds't thou prefer it to thy shepherd life?

DAVID.

I would that I could serve Israel, mother. But I am thy youngest son; my duty is here; I do not forget that, mother, so we will banish dreams and come to realities—I am hungry!

MOTHER.

Oh, son, I had forgotten; thou hast not had supper. I will go and make ready for thee. (*Exits in house.*)

DAVID.

(*After seeing* MOTHER *off—Sol.*) Dear mother, how little she knows the strength of my desire to mingle with the life beyond the hills—to be with those who are fighting for the freedom of Israel. The glory of it! How my senses tingle at the thought. I must drive those pictures from my mind, else they will grow, and I shall neglect my duty (*makes movement with* L. *arm; winces; slight exclamation; rolls up sleeves, shows scar.*) I had forgotten!

ADORA.

(*Who has been closely watching* DAVID *from the back,* L.; *comes down at his exclamation.*) David!

DAVID.

Adora, art thou there?

ADORA.

Thy arm!

DAVID.

'Tis nothing. How long hast thou been here?

ADORA.

I saw the good priest depart, I saw thy mother leave thee, and, David——

DAVID.

Yes, Adora?

ADORA.

I heard thy words. Thou art unhappy. Thy heart is no longer with thy sheep.

OZEM.

(*Enters from barn; remains unnoticed, watching them.*)

DAVID.

Nay, Adora, 'tis not that I love my sheep the less, or would neglect my duty, but I love my nation. Gladly would I give my life to serve her.

ADORA.

I know, David. When thou went on the hill tending thy flock I have watched thee. I knew that thy heart was elsewhere.

DAVID.

Why, child, never before have I spoken my thought aloud.

ADORA.

Not in words, David; but from thy music did I learn thy secret. When thy sheep were gathered about thee thou wouldst play a simple, gentle tune, that would harmonize with the quiet of the hills. Then as thy eyes would take on a deeper look; with an unconscious command thy music would change. Peace no longer reigned, 'twas the turmoil of strife. Thy flock, that a moment

before grazed with lazy indifference, would lift their heads. In their eyes would come the look of fear. Thy face would become stern and resolved. Then I knew thy heart was afar from thy pasture, and in thy dreams thou wert leading men to victory.

DAVID.

Thou hast learned what I thought had only been whispered upon my harp.

ADORA.

Some day thou wilt go, David, and fulfil thy heart's desire.

DAVID.

Thinkest thou so?

ADORA.

I pray that it will be!

DAVID.

I must housel my sheep for the night. (*Rises, X's in front of* ADORA. *Sees* OZEM.) Ah, brother, I did not see thee before; wilt thou drive the sheep into the fold?

OZEM.

I have finished my labor.

DAVID.

(*X's to* OZEM, *places his arm about him.*) Why dost thou speak so harshly? Have I done aught to wound thy feelings?

OZEM.

(*Turns away from him.*)

DAVID.

I did not mean that thou shouldst do my work, brother; I was wrong to ask it. (*Starts to* C. *To* ADORA.) If mother calls tell her I will soon return. (*Exits.*)

(*As* DAVID *exits,* ADORA *goes up to* C. *Looking after him,* OZEM *regards her for a second, then approaches her.*)

OZEM.

Now I know thy secret!

ADORA.

(*Turning.*) Ozem!

OZEM.

I know why thou wilt not listen to me. 'Tis because of him! (*Pointing off.*) Thou can'st not deny it; I saw thy looks!

ADORA.

What looks?

OZEM.

I saw thee as thou did'st kneel at his feet. I saw the color mount thy cheeks. I saw thy eyes light at his words. Thou lovest David!

ADORA.

Thou art mad to speak so!

OZEM.

'Tis the truth! I offered thee honorable love, offered to make thee my wife. Thou would'st not listen to *me,* but thou did'st hang on his words. Thou would'st make thyself his wanton.

ADORA.

No more, Ozem! In thy jealous rage thou hast wronged, insulted me.

OZEM.

Thou lov'st David!

ADORA.

I do! With a love that thou can'st not understand. 'Tis a love that ennobles not degrades, as thou say'st.

OZEM.

Hath he returned thy passion?

ADORA.

He hath never dreamed that it existed. Thou hast probed my secret. I do not deny the truth. I told thee that I could never be thy wife.

OZEM.

'Tis David that hath robbed me of thy love, I could hate him. (*X'ing* R.)

ADORA.

(*Catching him by the arm.*) Ozem! Unsay those wicked words. He is thy brother.

OZEM.

He hath thy love!

ADORA.

Thou must not bear bitterness against him; 'tis I that am to blame. He hath never spoken love to me. I have told thee all, Ozem. I know that thy affection for me will seal thy lips and thou wilt hold as sacred all I have said.

OZEM.

If thou wilt get over thy madness.

ADORA.

I will try.

OZEM.

Then wilt thou come to me?

ADORA.

Now that thou knowest all, dost thou still desire me?

OZEM.

More than ever. If thou wilt overcome thy folly, I know that thou will make a loyal wife.

ADORA.

Thou art generous, Ozem. I will try and think of thee and pray to become worthy.

OZEM.

Bless thee, Adora. (*Starts to embrace her.*)

ADORA.

No, no; not yet, Ozem! Thou must give me time.

OZEM.

I will be patient and wait till thou dost come to me. (*Going to* C. R.) Thou hast given me hope. (*Exits.*)

MOTHER.

(*Enters.*) Where is David?

ADORA.

He hath gone to shelter his flock for the night.

JESSE.

(*Enters in haste. Looking* R.) Mother, mother, prepare thyself. The noble Prince Jonathan and the Princess Michal are coming.

MOTHER.

Prince Jonathan and his sister—coming here?

JESSE.

Aye, and are close at hand. I ran ahead to tell thee. I met them on the road.

MOTHER.

Strange; what can it mean? Adora, prepare some wine.

JONATHAN.

(*Enter from steps with* MICHAL *and servants. Bodyguard in the rear.*) This is thy house, Jesse?

JESSE.

(ADORA *appears at door.*) Aye, my Lord Jonathan, wilt thou enter?

JONATHAN.

(C.) Thanks, good father; we will remain in the open. We must return as soon as I have seen thy son, David.

PHALTI.

Princess, allow me to conduct thee to a place of rest. (*Leads her to seat* L.)

MICHAL.

Noble Phalti, thou art ever considerate. (*They converse.*)

JESSE.

(*Who has X'd to* MOTHER.) Thou sayest that he hath gone to the sheepcote?

MOTHER.

Aye, but will be back in a few minutes.

JESSE.

(*To* JONATHAN.) My Lord, my son hath gone to attend his sheep for the night. I will send for him. (*Starts.*)

JONATHAN.

Nay, we will wait. Thy good wife says that he will soon return. (*Turns to* MICHAL *and* PHALTI.)

MOTHER.

Why do they desire to see our son?

JESSE.

The Prince hath heard of his playing, and would have him perform before the King.

MOTHER.

Our David to play before the King?

JESSE.

Aye! (*Converse together.*)

PHALTI.

Hast thou ever seen this paragon?

JONATHAN.

Nay, but from many have I heard of his playing.

MICHAL.

I am curious to see this shepherd boy, who is to rival our trained musicians.

JONATHAN.

Thou must remember, Michal, our father, the King, was of humble station.

DAVID.

(*Heard outside laughing.*)

JESSE.

(*X's up. Looks off* L.) Our son David is coming.

PHALTI.

(*At the laughing has X'd up.*) Aye, and a comely lad, too.

DAVID.

(*Comes running on with a carrier-pigeon in his hand. Does not notice the group on* L.) Ah, my dear mother, here is one of our doves returned with a message——

JESSE.

My son, Prince Jonathan would speak with thee. (*Indicating* PRINCE.)

DAVID.

(*Turning, seeing them, slightly abashed.*) Prince Jonathan! Oh! I crave pardon, my Lord.

MICHAL.

(*To* PHALTI.) Is he not a handsome lad?

JONATHAN.

Rise, David. I have come to thee with a command.

DAVID.

A command to me!

JONATHAN.

Aye, art thou not David, the player of the hills—such we have heard thee called.

MICHAL.

(*To* PHALTI.) What beautiful hair. (*X'ing to* DAVID.) Thy pardon, brother. (*To* DAVID.) Wilt thou let me look at thy dove?

DAVID.

(*Handing her the dove.*) 'Tis a carrier-dove from my brother Nethaneel, who resides to the north of the Hebron. At the first of the moon he doth send a message to our mother.

MICHAL.

The poor little thing. (*X'ing to* PHALTI. *petting dove.*)

JONATHAN.

(*To* DAVID.) Would'st thou change thy shepherd life to serve the King?

DAVID.

I would give my life to serve him—to serve Israel.

MICHAL.

(*To* PHALTI.) What fire in his eyes.

MOTHER.

(*Half weeping.*) Oh, pardon me, my Lord, David is my youngest. I cannot bear the thought of his being exposed to the dangers of war. (*Breaking down.*)

DAVID.

(*Goes to her; places her in chair* R.)

JESSE.

My Lord, we have given Israel our three eldest sons. They serve in the King's bodyguard.

JONATHAN.

(C.) I have allowed myself to be misunderstood. (*To* MOTHER.) Good mother, thou need'st not fear for thy son. I would have him serve the King with his harp.

PHALTI.

Such a command means glory to the musician.

MICHAL.

(*X'ing over to* DAVID *and handing back the dove.*) Thou would'st be the envy of them all. (*Returning, is met by* PHALTI.)

PHALTI.

(*Aside to* MICHAL.) Indeed he would, especially by me, if thy interest in him increaseth.

ADORA.

(*At sign from* DAVID, *comes to* DAVID, *takes the bird from him and X's around back of the stage and exits barn* L.)

DAVID.

I fear that reports have overrated my abilities. The melodies that I play are the traditional songs of our shepherds, and such as come to me when alone upon the hills.

I fear that my playing would not compare with that of the skilled musicians or appeal to the ear of the King.

PHALTI.

(*To* MICHAL.) How modest.

MICHAL.

'Tis most commendable.

JONATHAN.

'Tis simple music that I most desire. Our father, the King, hath been troubled with a malady that has baffled his physicians. Medicine has no power to reach afflictions of the mind. Advised by travelers of the East, musicians were brought before him. For a time their efforts seemed to dispel his gloom, but soon their power diminished. As one tires of the highly seasoned foods and hungers for the plainer fare, so the King has wearied of his players and asks to hear again those melodies from the hill country, where *he* lived when a boy. For this reason I am sent to fetch thee.

DAVID.

My Lord, to serve thee, to serve the king, would be the greatest happiness of my life.

JONATHAN.

If thy music, David, could but restore my father to his former self, I would be thy debtor always.

DAVID.

My Lord. (*Starts to kneel.* JONATHAN *restrains him.*)

JONATHAN.

I like thee, David. (*Placing hand on his shoulder.*) Come to the camp of Saul. Thou wilt have a friend in Jonathan.

MICHAL.

(*Coming forward.*) My brother's friends are also mine. Thou wilt come?

DAVID.

The day after the morrow. And early will I start; before the sun hath risen I will be at the vale of Elah.

JONATHAN.

'Tis well.

MOTHER.

David, thy apparel is not suitable, I fear.

JONATHAN.

(*Smiling.*) That shall be my care, good mother.

(MOTHER *and* FATHER *whisper, and she goes to house.*)

PHALTI.

My raiments shall be at thy disposal, David, and, I may say without vanity, no man can lay claim to greater variety than I. Thou shalt be dressed——

JONATHAN.

As befits him. I appreciate thy generous spirit, Phalti, but I would not have David other than he is.

PHALTI.

But dress doth make the man!

MICHAL.

Then men are easily made.

JONATHAN.

It often conceals the man.

BONDWOMAN.

(BONDWOMAN *enters, speaks to* JESSE.) Master, the wine is poured.

JESSE.

My Lord, wilt thou honor me by entering my house, that I may serve thee?

JONATHAN.

I thank thee, Jesse. And then we must return. Come, Michal.

MICHAL.

I will await thee here, brother.

PHALTI.

So will I.

MICHAL.

No, go thou with my brother. I am not thirsty and prefer to look about.

PHALTI.

Thy cruel commands are a pleasure to obey. (*Joins* JONATHAN *and* JESSE, *who exit.*)

DAVID.

(*As they exit goes* R., *looks then at* MICHAL, *who is* L.)

MICHAL.

(*Comes to* C.) Art thou loath to leave the hills and thy sheep?

DAVID.

I was thinking neither of the hills nor of my sheep. My thoughts were of my mother. She will miss me.

MICHAL.

Thou art thy mother's favorite? She can see thee often. Elah is not far distant. When I heard that my brother was coming in search of thee I persuaded my sister to let me accompany him. She was not pleased to have me come, and perhaps I was too wilful, for she hath taken the place of a mother to me.

DAVID.

Thou hast a sister?

MICHAL.

Aye, my elder sister, Merab.

DAVID.

The times are dangerous for travel.

MICHAL.

Yes, yes, I know: but it is so lonely at Gibeah now. I often journey to the camp and spend whole days with my father. Besides, I fear no harm when with my brother Jonathan.

DAVID.

Thou hast a noble brother.

MICHAL.

Aye, the best in the world. I love him dearly, as do all who know him.

DAVID.

I have lived always among these hills. I know nothing of the manners of those who live near the King. I fear I may offend.

MICHAL.

Nay, be thyself and thou can'st not offend. I have spoken to thee frankly, for I like thy ways, and thou hast not used flattering words to me. Thou need'st have no fear, thou wilt have a friend in my brother—and—and—my brothers friends are mine.

DAVID.

I pray that I may prove worthy of such honored friendship.

ADORA.

(*Enters from barn.*)

(*Re-enter* JONATHAN *and* PHALTI, *followed by* JESSE.)

JONATHAN.

Now, little sister, we must make ready to start. (*Motioning to servants.*) Prepare the way.

PHALTI.

(*Who has come down to* MICHAL.) Princess, I will conduct thee.

MICHAL.

(*Passes up stage between* PHALTI *and* DAVID *to* C. *Drops a rose. She turns for it as she does so.* DAVID *and* PHALTI, *who are about equal distance from it, step forward to secure it.* DAVID *gains the rose.* MICHAL *gives a slight laugh.* DAVID *hands it to her.*)

MICHAL.

(*Takes it, regards it for a second, then proffers it to* DAVID.) A reward for thy alertness.

DAVID.

(*Taking it.*) I thank thee, Princess.

PHALTI.

(*Goes up to* C. *Turns to* DAVID.) The Wise Men of the East tell us that every life has a particular star to guide it. Thy star, David, is much in evidence. (*Exit.*)

JONATHAN.

The day after to-morrow, David, I shall expect thee.

(MICHAL *joins her brother. They exit* L. *Unnoticed she drops a piece of her garment.*)

DAVID.

(*X's up, looks off. Places rose in bosom of shirt.*)

MOTHER.

(*Who is by table,* R.) David!

DAVID.

Yes, mother. (*Coming to her.*)

MOTHER.

Thou art going, David?

DAVID.

Aye, mother, 'tis a command.

MOTHER.

I am loath to part with thee, my son.

DAVID.

The distance is not great. I will come to see thee often.

MOTHER.

My love for thee would make me selfish, my son.

DAVID.

(*Has placed her in a chair and kneels by her side,* L.) Thy love, my mother, will always be with me, whether near or far. Thy teachings will I keep in my heart, thy image will be always before me. If I have been ambitious, if I have dreamed of doing something that would benefit our people, dear mother, it was always with the thought that you would smile and be proud of your David. I would be great, not for greatness sake, but for thine. I am to leave my sheep to play before the King. Ah, mother, pray that I may sound a chord whose deep vibrations may find a response in the heart of Saul, that he may be our King, as of old—the glory of Israel!

MOTHER.

(*Rises and kisses him on forehead.*) My prayer shall always be for thee, my boy, my boy!

DAVID.

(*Rising and putting arm about her, leads her to house.*) Come, mother, think no more of my going. Thy David cannot be happy while there are tears in his mother's eyes.

MOTHER.

My boy. (*Kisses him and exits.*)

DAVID.

(*Takes rose from bosom, regards it, comes down to table.*)

ADORA.

(*Who has remained in the background,* L., *comes to* C.) David!

DAVID.

What is it, Adora?

ADORA.

Who wilt tend the sheep when thou art gone?

DAVID.

Why, I had not thought of that.

ADORA.

I should like to do it for thee.

DAVID.

Thou, Adora? Why thou art not strong enough to protect my sheep. Ozem must take my place when I am gone.

ADORA.

And yet I would I might. They know my voice and would not wander from me.

DAVID.

True, Dora, and if it please thee thou shalt go with Ozem.

ADORA.

I thank thee, David. And, David, when wilt thou come back? Will it be long?

DAVID.

I do not know how long, Adora; but when the King is pleased I will return.

ADORA.

If I get thee thy harp wilt thou play one of thy shepherd tunes for me?

DAVID.

Aye, Adora. (*Adora exits in house.*) (*Goes up, looks off* L.) The dear old hills! Yet I do not feel the regret I know I should to leave them. 'Tis the sweet Princess' doings. She is as fair as the flower (*coming down table*) she gave it to me. (*Looks fondly at flower.*) Ah, David, David! Thou art letting thy foolish fancies run riot in thy heart.

ADORA.

(*Enters with harp. Hands it to* DAVID. *Sits on sheepcote,* C.)

DAVID.

(*Takes harp; sings simple pastoral song.*) Adora, hast thou ever seen one so fair as the Princess?

ADORA.

Never, David.

(MICHAL *enters looking for lost article. Stops, and listens to song.* ADORA *turns and sees her.* MICHAL *motions for her to be silent. She hears* DAVID'S *last speech.* JONATHAN *comes, takes* MICHAL *by hand, leads her off. At this point* DAVID, *who has been arranging flower, stops suddenly, as though he felt her presence, turns, sees nothing; shows disappointment* [*pause*]; *then goes quickly to* C. *Looking off, sees* MICHAL.)

DAVID.

Adora, the Princess!

ADORA.

Aye!

MOTHER.

(*Enters from house.*) David, thy supper. (Curtain.)

END OF FIRST ACT.

Lights start to change, at JONATHAN'S first exit, from sunset to twilight; moon effect as DAVID starts song.

CHARACTERS USED IN THE SECOND ACT.

Saul.....King of Israel

Jonathan.....His Son

Doeg.....An Edomite, Captain of a Thousand

Omar (His Brother).....Captain of 2d Guard

Eliah,
Abinadab,
Shammah,
.....Sons of Jesse

Goliath.....The Philistine Giant

Tamar.....Captain of 1st Guard

Armor-bearer .....

Merab,
Michal,
.....Saul's daughters

and

David.....A Shepherd Boy, afterward King of Israel

Soldiers, Officers, Musicians, Courtiers and Court Ladies, etc.

ACT SECOND.

Vale of Elah.—Encampment of Saul's army. Saul's tent L. 1. At back uneven ground, rising to slight eminence, C., back. Back drop shows Vale of Elah, a stream divides the rival armies. Tents of the Israelites to the L., and just discernible, across stream, R., begin the tents of the Philistines.

Time: Early morning, sunrise effects, etc. At rise of curtain, trumpet is sounded for the change of guard. Enter, from the L. U. E., column of soldiers; the sentry that is on duty at rise falls in the rear. Simultaneously with this action relief guard enters from R. 2. E., so that both columns meet center. Exchange salutes.

OMAR (*Of relieving guard*).

What news of the night?

CAPTAIN TAMAR (*Of relieved guard*).

None. The accursed Philistines have no fear of us. They sleep soundly.

OMAR.

How goes it with your men?

CAPTAIN TAMAR.

Their hearts are filled with bitterness, for forty days have they had to listen to the taunts of Goliath, who gives us the dare to our teeth, and, like jackals, we listen and run to cover. Thou art not an Israelite?

OMAR.

No, I am an Edomite, and serve your King.

CAPTAIN TAMAR.

Have you the watchword?

OMAR.

No.

CAPTAIN.

"The Lord is King."

OMAR.

And the answer?

CAPTAIN.

"Saul, his servant."

OMAR.

(*Salutes.*) Peace be with thee.

CAPTAIN.

(*Salutes.*) And with thee. (*Gives order; exits* L. 2.)

JONATHAN.

(*Enters, followed by* DOEG, L. U. *Salutes.*)

JONATHAN.

Peace be with thee. Of what watch art thou?

OMAR.

Second watch of the morning, Prince Jonathan. I am about to place my men.

JONATHAN.

Do so.

OMAR.

(*Gives order, men exit* R. 2, *leaves two on guard.*)

JONATHAN.

Seat thyself, Captain Doeg, and let me hear the news from the north.

DOEG.

(R.) There is nothing of moment to relate, save of a few cursory attacks against the Philistines, carried on to keep our men alert.

JONATHAN.

A wise course. One sadly needed in our ranks.

DOEG.

I have heard that discontent reigns among you.

JONATHAN.

We are practically in a state of siege. On the hills to our right the Philistines are encamped with thrice our number, holding the vantage ground. My father dared not make a stand until you arrived with forces from the north. Our men have been subjected to the mouthings and insults of the Philistine rabble, led by the giant Goliath, who daily appears and hurls at us defiance.

DOEG.

And the inactivity of your soldiers hath allowed mutiny to spread amongst them.

JONATHAN.

Yes, but to-day, Saul holds council with his captains, who will urge immediate action. Doubt not your King will lead you to victory, as when he fought the Amalekites.

DOEG.

It is the daily prayers of our people.

MERAB.

(*Enters from* L.)

JONATHAN.

Sister Merab (*X's to her*), you are abroad early.

MERAB.

Michal, is she not here?

JONATHAN.

No, I have not seen her; but here is Doeg, returned from the north.

DOEG.

(*X's to* C., *kneels and kisses* MERAB'S *hand.*) Greeting Merab; my silence must speak my joy at seeing you. Words cannot express my feelings.

MERAB.

They have done much towards it, Captain Doeg. Peace be with thee. (*To* JONATHAN.) Brother, I am concerned about Michal; she left her couch before dawn, and has not returned.

JONATHAN.

Fear not, she is probably wandering about the stream. I will go in search of her. Captain, I will see thee at the Council. (*Exits up steps,* R. V.)

DOEG.

Merab, now that we are alone, have you no warmer greeting for me?

MERAB.

I am glad of your safe return. I might say that I have wished for it.

DOEG.

Your words cast a doubt upon your sincerity. Merab, have you no word of love for me?

MERAB.

These are not the times to think of love. Are we not daily threatened by invasion from the Philistines?

DOEG.

My love for you,—that is more powerful than all else. For the three months that I have been away from thee, one thought, one passion alone has possessed me. Every time I drew my sword against the cursed Philistines, it was not for the children of Israel, but for thee. My love hath grown until it consumes me. Of what consequence to me are deeds of valor, glory, or even a crown, without thy love? Merab, my passion is so great, my manhood is humbled; and even on my knees I would sue to thee for a word of love. (*Kneels.*)

MERAB.

Rise, Doeg. I appreciate thy love. In heart I am not worthy of thy passion.

DOEG.

Not worthy! Nay, 'tis I that am not worthy!

MERAB.

Since thy departure there have been many changes. I am no longer free.

DOEG.

What say'st thou? Dost mean that thou hast given thy love to another, after thy promise to me?

MERAB.

Nay, do not misunderstand; 'tis not that I esteem thee less, but my hand is no longer free. Israel is threatened. My father is powerless while the dark spirit is over him. He hath proclaimed that to the one who will overcome this boasting giant, he will give my hand, and place him at the head of the army.

DOEG.

A position that I was led to expect as a reward for the services I have rendered.

MERAB.

I am Saul's eldest daughter. I would rule. Love is the dream of the weak. It would not suffice for me.

DOEG.

You would sacrifice me to gain the summit of your ambition?

MERAB.

The position is mine by right of birth. I will hold it if I sacrifice my soul.

DOEG.

Such is your love?

MERAB.

Such my ambition.

DOEG.

Dost think the spark thou hast kindled in my breast could be extinguished? No! That spark has grown to a passion. In thy dream of ambition thou hast forgotten me, *Doeg, the Edomite!* Thou hast but one ambition. I, like thee, have but one: To possess thee!

MERAB.

(*Gives slight laugh.*)

DOEG.

Merab, do not mock me. My love is great. Dost thou think that I would allow another to take thee from me? No! Before that, my sword would cleave him in twain, or bury itself in thy heart! (*Seizing her hand.*)

MERAB.

(*Wrenching herself free.*) Dost forget that thou art speaking to the daughter of *thy king!*

DOEG.

Nay; I am speaking to the woman I worship.

MERAB.

My heart goes with my hand, to the highest! (*X'ing to* L. U.) Thy way lies through the destruction of Goliath.

DOEG.

Nay, proud Princess; it lies through my will. I am determined, though a dozen Goliaths rise as barriers.

OMAR.

(*Enters* C.) Doeg!

DOEG.

(L. C. *turns.*) Omar, my brother. (*Embrace.*)

OMAR.

I heard not of thy arrival.

DOEG.

I returned this morning, from beyond Jordan. Are we free to speak?

OMAR.

Yes; I have just entered on *guard* duty—there are none about.

DOEG.

Tell me, brother; how stand affairs here?

OMAR.

Badly. Saul's madness continues. For forty days he hath done nothing but debauch, rave, and curse before all who seek him. The army is demoralized; every day men desert. It is only their love for Jonathan that keeps the army from total revolt.

DOEG.

And the Philistines?

OMAR.

I have kept them informed of Saul's condition. They know that each day his madness lasts, greater will grow the mutiny among the Israelites. Daily hath Goliath appeared and hurled defiance at Saul, to irritate and keep alive the evil spirit. To-day I have prepared a new torture for him. When he hath his captains about him at the Council I will fire an arrow in their midst. Around it will be a strip of parchment, torn from their sacred writings, with Goliath's challenge upon it.

DOEG.

But the risk. It will be known that the arrow was discharged within our lines. It will arouse suspicion.

OMAR.

Even so, as long as it does not point towards me.

DOEG.

And what say'th Goliath to all this?

OMAR.

He hath promised us large rewards in gold and silver, and will give us rank equal to the highest in the land.

DOEG.

'Tis well! But thou canst not be too careful, brother. (*Hand on his shoulder.*)

OMAR.

Thirst for revenge hath made me bold. Yet I will be prudent. I have not forgotten the day that a band of marauders from Saul's army murdered our parents and left our home in ashes.

DOEG.

The revenge that we have waited for is close at hand. I serve them, but I hate them all—*all,* save one.

OMAR.

(*Surprised.*) Save one!

DOEG.

Saul's eldest daughter—Merab.

OMAR.

You love her?

DOEG.

I love her as I hate her kin!

OMAR.

Does she know?

DOEG.

Yes.

OMAR.

And returns thy love?

DOEG.

She shall; I have sworn it! (*Trumpet sounds.*)

OMAR.

I must return.

DOEG.

Farewell.

OMAR.

Fear not for me, none shall ever know that the same mother bore us. And if ill should befall me, as a stranger to thee I will die. Farewell. (*Exits* L.)

DOEG.

(*Starts to exit. Sees* JONATHAN *and* MICHAL. *Salutes and exits* L. U.)

MICHAL.

(*Bearing in her arms flowers.*) Do not scold me, brother.

JONATHAN.

I will not scold thee, little sister; but these are dangerous times, and it is not safe for thee to wander beyond our lines.

MICHAL.

I will obey thee, brother Jonathan; I did wrong in going so far, but the morning was so beautiful, the flowers so sweet, that I was tempted. But see, I have conquered my tempters, and brought them prisoners, as soon I hope thou mayst the wicked Philistines.

MERAB.

(*Enters from* L.)

JONATHAN.

They shall yet feel the power of Israel!

MERAB.

Child, thou hast done wrong, and caused thy brother and myself great worry. I would not have our father know of thy transgression.

JONATHAN.

She is truly penitent, Merab.

MICHAL.

Yes, and—and will give thee as a peace-offering these sweet flowers. See, are they not beautiful? (*To* MERAB.) This garland I will hang about thy queenly neck; to brother Jonathan I will give a kiss (*does so*) as cold metal armor is a poor background for tender flowers.

MERAB.

Why, Michal, these flowers are from the hills. Surely, thou hast not ventured——

MICHAL.

To the hills? Even so. Within sight of the tents of the Philistines.

JONATHAN.

Child! My sister; thy danger!

MICHAL.

Ah! Don't scold me, brother! I have been punished. (*As she X's to throne to place balance of flowers at foot of chair* L., *a round flat stone falls from the folds of her dress. Picking up stone.*) Ah! Here is my reminder, brother and sister mine; do you behold this lowly stone? It saved my life!

MERAB.

Michal!

JONATHAN.

What say'st thou?

MICHAL.

(*Raising her hand.*) Silence and listen! Thou, brother, on my right hand. (*To* MERAB.) Thou at the foot of the throne: a fitting seat for my queenly sister—while I relate my little adventure: The first blast of the trumpet awakened me; I wandered out into the open; the dew was heavy on the ground; the sun just flashing her rays above the horizon. The flowers seemed to smile; all was still, save the tread of the sentry. I plucked a flower here, another a little further on, and as I would raise my eyes still another seemed to nod and bid me come. Thus I ran from flower to flower, vowing that each should be my last. Still ahead, like the illusory horizon, one more, each handsomer than the other. At last my greed was satisfied. I looked about me, and to my amazement, found that I had wandered almost to the sentry lines of our enemy.

JONATHAN.

Sister!

MICHAL.

I turned and fled towards our father's tent. Scarcely had I ran the distance of a well-spent arrow, when I was startled by a roar. I turned—a great mountain lion pursued me. Imagine my alarm. Of course, I screamed and ran the faster, but it was useless. Exhausted with fright, I sank to the ground. The animal was but a length away. I closed my eyes and tried to pray. Just then a wizzing sound assailed my ears, and then a thud. Fearingly I opened my eyes. The lion was in his death gasp, and rolling towards me this stone that had slain the monster and saved my life.

MERAB.

Wonderful!

JONATHAN.

And who was your protector?

MICHAL (*Coyly*).

I know nothing, save that he was a shepherd lad, which I perceived from his dress as he came running towards me.

MERAB.

You spoke with him?

MICHAL.

Not a word. He gave me no chance, for when he saw that I had risen, and was unharmed, he stopped in his course towards me, waved his hand, turned, and ran away. Nor did he once turn his head in my direction, although I watched until he was out of sight.

JONATHAN.

His modesty proves him a brave man. (*Laughs with her.*) I should like to know the noble youth.

MICHAL.

He was a comely lad, with abundance of glossy hair that glistened in the sun. (*Sighs.*) Ah, me! It would not be hard to love such a youth!

MERAB.

Fie! thou sentimental child! Go put thyself in the hands of thy maids, that they may make thee presentable. Our father, to-day, holds council with his captains.

MICHAL.

Ah, dear sister! that is why thou hast dressed with such care, eh! eh! The noble Captain Doeg will be here? Eh! eh! (*Laughs.*)

MERAB.

Foolish child!

MICHAL.

The rose is in thy cheek, sister. But I will obey thee. (*Going.*) How I should like to see my shepherd-lad in a captain's habiliments. I know he would rival Captain Doeg, and almost equal our brother. (*Exits, laughing.*)

MERAB.

Brother, how long are we to endure the insults of the enemy without raising our hands against them?

JONATHAN.

A stand will be taken to-day.

MERAB.

Is it not true that the knowledge of our father's condition hath disheartened the army, and that they say, among themselves, "King Saul is mad?"

JONATHAN.

Aye, sister, 'tis but too true. Let us hope that when he sees his officers about him to-day, he will be restored to his old self, and so renew confidence in the army.

MERAB.

Dost thou believe in Samuel's words: "That the kingdom shall be given to another at our father's death?"

JONATHAN.

What right have I to doubt it? Samuel is the prophet of Jehovah.

MERAB.

Then the royal sceptre will pass from us, and thou wilt be deprived of thy birth-right?

JONATHAN.

'Tis so declared.

MERAB.

And he who will take thy place, hath he been chosen?

JONATHAN.

Heaven hath consecrated him. 'Tis said that the prophet Samuel hath already anointed him, and his brow but awaits the crown.

MERAB.

His name?

JONATHAN.

None knows, save God and the prophet Samuel.

MERAB.

(*X'ing* L.) Thus through no act of thine, thou art deprived of a crown.

JONATHAN.

But, if the passing of the crown from me would restore our father to peace and honor, gladly would I relinquish all my rights.

MERAB.

Thou are indeed a generous man. (*Exits.*)

(*Enter* ELIAH, ABINADAB *and* SHAMMAH *in dress of King's body-guard. All salute.*)

JONATHAN.

Peace be with thee! Thou art sons of Jesse! Captains in the King's body-guard?

ELIAH.

(L.) Aye, my lord.

JONATHAN.

Hast thou not a younger brother, named David?

ABINADAB.

(*Aside to* SHAMMAH.) The Prince hath heard of David's anointment.

SHAMMAH.

Yes, my lord; he tends our father's flock. As a singer and player on the harp he hath no equal throughout the hills.

ELIAH.

Accomplishments of little purpose, when the Philistines surround our homes.

JONATHAN.

Thou art wrong, Eliah; many great deeds have been born of song.

SHAMMAH.

So have I heard, and when the prophet Samuel honored our village, of all our house, 'twas David he blessed, and anointed with oil.

ABINADAB.

Thus planting the seed of vanity, and setting him above us.

JONATHAN.

(*Surprised.*) Thou sayest that the prophet Samuel showed special favor to thy brother, David?

SHAMMAH.

True, my lord; Samuel did bless, and pour sacred oil upon his head.

ELIAH.

The prophet was moved by the music of his voice and his pretty face.

JONATHAN.

Thou dost thy brother an injustice, Eliah. Learn to love him. Honor is in store for all of thy house. Peace be with thee. (*Exits*).

ELIAH.

Dost thou hear, brothers? The Prince favors us; we may be advanced.

SHAMMAH.

'Tis not of us alone the Prince is thinking; his words include our brother David. (*Enter* DAVID.)

ELIAH.

David! Thou dost make too much of the lad—and it would be well for thee to speak less of Samuel's foolish act.

ABINADAB.

Even tho' the seer did mock us, and pour the oil upon his pretty head, what has come of it? Hasn't he still kept his sheep?

ELIAH.

Tho' me thinks his pride hath enlarged, and of late he casts longing eyes upon the soldier's life.

SHAMMAH.

Thou are wrong, brothers, in speaking so of our David. The lad hath no pride. He sought not the honor, whatever may come of it.

DAVID.

I am glad I have one brother who loves me.

SHAMMAH.

(*Embraces* DAVID.) I am glad to see thee, David.

DAVID.

I thank thee, Shammah, and I am glad to find thee noble.

ELIAH.

(*Ignores* DAVID *and X's* L.) What hast brought thee here?

ABINADAB.

(*Following* ELIAH.) Hast thou turned traitor to thy parents?

SHAMMAH.

For shame!

ELIAH.

Thy place is with our father, tending his flock.

ABINADAB.

Thou art not needed here.

SHAMMAH.

(*To* ELIAH *and* ABINADAB.) If thou canst not speak kindly, then hold thy peace.

ELIAH.

'Tis thy encouragement that hath filled his head with vanity, and made him neglect his work.

DAVID.

Thou art wrong, Eliah. Never have I neglected my duties. I am here at the command of the King.

ELIAH and ABINADAB.

Command of the King? (*Laugh.*)

DAVID.

Aye, brought by Prince Jonathan.

SHAMMAH.

(*Who is standing by* DAVID.) 'Tis an honor, indeed. If thou canst but please the King, thou wilt be greater than one of his captains.

ABINADAB.

And thy elder brothers will bow low to thee. Return to thy father, tend his flocks and perform thy work; not idle thy time singing ditties at the King's Court.

DAVID.

Thou art unjust. Never have I thought to put myself above any one. I am no longer a boy, but a man, yet I feel thy words bitterly. If I show no resentment, 'tis not that I lack spirit. I do not wish to quarrel with my brothers.

SHAMMAH.

David is right. Thy envy hath made thee both bitter.

ELIAH.

Dost thou seek to quarrel with us?

SHAMMAH.

I wish no quarrel, but from now on I will stand by David! (*Trumpet sounds.*)

ABINADAB.

The King hath risen! Come!

ELIAH.

(*X to* DAVID L.) Have a care that thou dost not disgrace us. (*Follows* ABINADAB.)

SHAMMAH.

Do not heed them, David. 'Tis their envy that speaks. Fear nothing, if thou art called to play before the King. I must go now. The King holds his council here. Thou may'st remain, and later I will join thee. (*Exits* C. L.)

MICHAL.

(*Enters from* L.)

DAVID.

(*X's and picks up short sword from* R.) Ah, Israel! I pray for the day when thou shalt sheath thy sword and thy power over thy enemies shall be gained. (*Holding sword up.*)

MICHAL.

(*Enters cautiously.*) Art thou a warrior or shepherd?

DAVID.

(*Dropping sword, turns, embarrassed.*) Princess! (*Kneels.*)

MICHAL.

Thou hast thy crook in one hand, a sword in the other. I know not which becomes thee the most.

DAVID.

The sword I know little of.

MICHAL.

And yet thou hast a weapon by thy side.

DAVID.

My sling.

MICHAL.

Art thou proficient in its use?

DAVID.

It hath never failed me.

MICHAL.

And to thy prowess I owe my life! (*Holding out her hand.*)

DAVID.

(*Kneels, bows over hand.*)

MICHAL.

I thank thee, David.

DAVID.

Nay, 'tis nothing.

MICHAL.

Nothing! Dost thou think my life of so little value?

DAVID.

(*Embarrassed.*) I—I meant not that—I—I meant that serving thee is an honor, and deserves no thanks.

MICHAL.

Why, I thought thee free from flattery. Thy speech is worthy of the noble Phalti.

DAVID.

Thy pardon, Princess. I would not so presume. I know my station. Thou art the daughter of a King. My words, Princess, came from my heart.

MICHAL.

I do not doubt thou art sincere. I did but jest. But tell me, why did'st thou run away from me on the hill?

DAVID.

I saw thee freed from danger. What more could I have done?

MICHAL.

And did'st thou know me?

DAVID.

Aye, I had been watching thee. I shouted; thou didst not hear me; then I ran towards thee, preparing my sling; praying Jehovah to guide my aim.

MICHAL.

Thy prayer was heard.

DAVID.

Thy danger was so great, that in the interval I lived years of torture. My limbs seemed paralyzed, my blood frozen; my heart ceased to beat for a moment; a haze veiled my sight, and when the mist cleared, and I saw the creature fall, I knew that thou wert safe. The reaction was so great that my senses seemed to desert me. I shouted with thankfulness. 'Twas then—— (*Hand to his eyes. X'ing a little to* R.)

MICHAL.

(*Regards him a second, then goes to him. Timidly takes his hand and turns him towards her.*) Why, there are tears in thy eyes, David!

DAVID.

Oh, Princess! Do not think me weak!

MICHAL.

Weak! Thou art noble! Thou hast done much for me, David. Thou hast saved my life, and—— (*Slight laugh.*) I told Merab and Jonathan how I was saved by a shepherd boy. But, I—I did not mention thy name.

DAVID.

In my services to thee, Princess, I was but an instrument. I have come to serve the King with the best that is in me.

(*Flourish of trumpets.*)

MICHAL.

My father comes to hold his council here. Should Merab see me conversing with thee alone she would scold me. In my frankness to thee, thou wilt not think me unmaidenly?

DAVID.

I honor thee as I honor my mother's love. I would serve thee with my life. (*Kisses hand. Starts to kneel.*)

MICHAL.

(*In a hurry, as flourish sounds.*) Nay, thou shalt not kneel. I will pray for thy success. Peace be with thee!

(*Enter processional march.*)

(SOLDIERS *come on from two columns, up and down stage, facing each other. Enter* SAUL, *who passes between columns to his chair* R. *Then enter* JONATHAN, DOEG, ELIAH, ABINADAB, SHAMMAH. JONATHAN *stands at* SAUL'S R., DOEG *at his* L. *Three* BROTHERS *dress stage* R. DAVID *joins them, and remains on their* L. SOLDIERS *form group back.*)

SAUL.

(*To* JONATHAN.) Whom have we assembled?

JONATHAN.

The three sons of Jesse, captains of thy body-guard, Abner of the thousand, and Tamar of the five hundred,

light armed Doeg, who arrived this morning from beyond Jordan.

SAUL.

How many men did he bring?

JONATHAN.

He will answer for himself.

DOEG.

(*Stepping forward.*) A quarter of our band, O King; no more could be spared.

SAUL.

No more could be spared! Why no more? Are they cowards? Or do they fear to serve under the standard of the mad King? Is that not what I am called?

DOEG.

Nay, your Majesty. No loyal Israelite hath heard such said, and allowed the speaker to live.

SAUL.

Retire. Thy words do but jingle. They have not the ring of honesty.

JONATHAN.

(*Gently places hand on* SAUL'S *arm.*) Father!

SAUL.

(*Turns to* JONATHAN.) Eh, ah! Jonathan, my son, my son; robbed of his birthright through the will of Samuel.

JONATHAN.

But he is the mouth-piece of God, Father!

SAUL.

How can a King reign, and conquer, and bless his kingdom with Heaven armed against him, Hell leagued to destroy him, and earth's most powerful seer hurling

prophecies of evil upon his head? It is all this that has brought the evil spirit upon me.

JONATHAN.

My dear father, the holy prophet holdeth no anger. He pities thee, and——

SAUL.

Pities! Pities Saul, the King! Let him beware! By the head of my father, if he pities me I will slay him, though he cling to the gates of Heaven!

Business: Arrow comes from R. U. *Sticks in stage* L. C. *Picture of general consternation for a second.*

DOEG.

(*Rushes forward, seizes arrow.*)

JONATHAN.

(*Goes to his* L. *Looks at missile. Gives order.*) Shammah, take the soldiers on guard, scour the immediate vicinity, arrest all who cannot explain their presence. Go!

SHAMMAH.

(*Exits* R. U. *with soldiers.*)

SAUL.

What is the purport of this new outrage?

JONATHAN.

An arrow hath been discharged within our sentry lines.

SAUL.

And the message attached?

DOEG.

It is writ on parchment, torn from the sacred writings.

SAUL.

What sayest thou! A desecration of the holy parchments of Israel! No man, save a dog of a Philistine would dare such an act! Read me the message!

JONATHAN.

Father, bid me destroy this scurrilous missile.

SAUL.

Dost think me so weak that I can no longer bear the stings of my enemies? Read!

DOEG.

(*Reads.*) To Saul, of Kish, King of Slaves: Goliath of Gath, sendeth thee greetings. By this writing he challengeth thee to single combat for thy Crown. He awaiteth Saul, the Hebrew, King of Slaves! Send me thy answer, thou dog of a Jew.

SAUL.

(*During reading, seems transfixed. Slight pause, with deep intensity.*) Oh, God of Israel, if Thou hast sought to scourge me for my disobedience, how great has been my punishment. My soul is raw and bleeding, exposed to the venomous stings of my enemies! (*Sinks back in deep gloom.*)

ELIAH.

(*Who at* SHAMMAH'S *exit X's up back.*) Your Majesty, Shammah and his men are returning.

JONATHAN.

Alone?

ELIAH.

No; they have a prisoner with them.

DOEG.

A prisoner. (*Quickly X's up to* C.)

ELIAH.

And he wears the uniform of an Israelite.

JONATHAN.

A traitor. I thought as much.

SHAMMAH.

(*Enters with soldiers; between them is* OMAR *—arms bound behind him.*)

DOEG.

(*Just previous to* SHAMMAH'S entrance, *shows emotion and X's to* R. 1.)

SHAMMAH.

(*To* JONATHAN.) My lord, this man was hastening away from the opening between the sentry lines. He would not explain why he was so far away from his post. He is Captain of the second morning guard to the north of the royal tent.

JONATHAN.

(*To* OMAR.) Thy name?

OMAR.

Omar.

JONATHAN.

Thy father's name?

OMAR.

Seek for it among those murdered by thy father, the King of Slaves.

JONATHAN.

Search him!

SHAMMAH.

(*Searches him; draws from behind his breast-plate fragment of parchment, which he hands to* JONATHAN.)

JONATHAN.

Compare it with other piece. (*To* DOEG.)

Positions: OMAR *has been brought down to* R. C. *The* SOLDIERS *have retired after searching, to back of the stage.* SHAMMAH *is* R. *of* OMAR. JONATHAN *is* L. *of him.* ELIAH *is with* ABINADAB, R. 2. DOEG *is* R. DAVID, *during scene, has worked back stage, so that he is about* C. *back.*

SAUL.

(*To* OMAR.) Thou slave! thou dog of an Edomite! I would that thou hadst a hundred lives, that I might wrench them from thee. One will not suffice for my hatred of thee. I'll send thy traitorous soul to hell. (*In his passion rushes forward to strike javelin at* OMAR, *and is met by* DAVID, *who begins to sing.*)

DAVID.

(*Coming in front of* SAUL, *sings in low tone.*)

SAUL.

(*In amazement at boy's audacity, stands on picture. His countenance changes; his passion subsides.*) Noble youth! Thy music, aye, audacity hath mastered my passion; reason again reigns. Stand thou by my side! (*Last speech spoken slowly, as he returns to his seat. With this action* DAVID *follows, and continues the playing.*)

JONATHAN.

(*To* OMAR.) Traitor! Death shall be thy reward! Doeg, attend to it!

DOEG.

(*Slight exclamation; staggers a little.*) Ah!

ELIAH.

What is it? (*Catching him.*)

DOEG.

(*Throwing* ELIAH *aside.*) 'Tis nothing.

JONATHAN.

(*Regarding him.*) Yet thy cry had the ring of pain.

DOEG.

A catch from an old javelin wound in the side.

JONATHAN.

Away with him!

Business: DOEG *motions soldiers—two come down, one on each side of* OMAR—*and lead him off—followed by* DOEG.

SAUL.

(*Oblivious to scene.*) Thy name, youth?

DAVID.

(*Still playing.*) David, O King; son of Jesse of Bethlehem.

JONATHAN.

(*Aside; looking at picture.*) David, the consecrated one.

SAUL.

I see that thou dost not think me mad, like the rest. I would like to keep thee near me. (*Extending his hand.*)

DAVID.

(*Raising hand to his lips.*) My life, O King, is at thy command!

MICHAL.

(*On business has X'd to* JONATHAN.) 'Tis he! My shepherd lad!

JONATHAN.

Yea, I know! See what a change he hath wrought upon our father. Noble youth; my heart goes out to him.

MICHAL.

(*Coyly.*) So does mine, brother Jonathan. (*X's to* MERAB.)

DOEG.

(*Enters X's* R.)

ELIAH.

(*To his* BROTHER.) Now we will have to bow our heads to our younger brother.

ABINADAB.

The boy will next fancy his shepherd crook a sceptre.

Business: Sentry steps forward, makes a salute to DOEG, *who answers and goes to* C.

MICHAL.

(*To* MERAB.) Hast thou ever seen his like?

MERAB.

He hath a manner that doth fascinate one. He hath charmed our father.

DOEG.

(*Coming* C.) Goliath of Gath, the leader of the Philistines, surrounded by a band of the sons of Anak, hath crossed the stream and approaches your Majesty's tent. (*General hum of consternation follows the mention of* GOLIATH'S *name.*)

JONATHAN.

(*X's up to* C.)

DOEG.

(*X's to* R.)

SAUL.

Away with music! Again this boasting giant comes to annoy me, and I am powerless to stop his mouth!

DAVID.

(*Who has X'd to his* BROTHER.) Who is this man whose approach brings consternation upon all?

SHAMMAH.

It is the giant Goliath, a man twice thy height, and eight times thy weight; so powerful that no man living could stand before him.

SAUL.

I am accursed! Accursed!

VOICE OF GOLIATH.

Saul, Son of Kish, and King of Slaves! Goliath of Gath challengeth thee to single combat. For forty days have I waited. Hast thy blood turned water?

SAUL.

This boasting giant is sent to curse me by his gods. When will the burden of my life end? Rather would I perish by his sword, than live to listen to his taunts!

JONATHAN.

Let him defy us; words do no harm. We are strong within our entrenchments. They fear to assail us.

DAVID.

Why cannot thy men surround this man and take him prisoner?

JONATHAN.

It would be contrary to our rules of war. This man is a champion, chosen by his people; his person is sacred against attack, save by a champion elected by us.

VOICE OF GOLIATH.

How now, thou King of Slaves! Is there no man of Israel brave enough to show me his face?

SAUL.

To the one who would rid me of this torment I would make him great in riches and honor; his father's house should be made princes in the land, and the hand of my eldest daughter should be his!

MERAB.

(*To* DOEG.) Thou hearest?

DOEG.

(*To* MERAB.) There is no man who can stand against him.

SAUL.

In all Israel, is there no man! No man! Not one! Who hath the courage, the faith of God, to rid their King of this monster?

DOEG.

Oh, King, do not think that we of the army lack courage! To go against this man is certain death! The contest is unequal! No single man can overcome him!

DAVID.

If there be no other to meet this blasphemer, with thy permission, O King, I will go.

OMNES.

Thou! The lad is a fool! He doth try to shame us! Etc.

DOEG.

Comest thou here to insult us?

SAUL.

What saith the youth?

ELIAH.

Cease thy mouthings; thou knowest not what thou speakest!

DOEG.

Thou stripling, dost think to laugh at us?

ELIAH.

Return and watch our father's sheep; seek not to insult the soldiers of Israel.

OMNES.

Let him cease. Send him home. Etc., etc.

DAVID.

(*To* OMNES.) Rail not against me, men of Israel; my words were spoken in truth. (*Down in front of* SAUL, *kneeling.*) Hear me, O King; kneeling I crave my suit!

OMNES.

(*Remonstrate amongst themselves.*)

SAUL.

(*To* OMNES.) Cease! The lad hath a heart of a lion! (*To* DAVID.) Brave youth, thou hast found favor in my sight. Rise. I love thee for thy courage. But thou art only a youth, and this Goliath is a man of war.

DAVID.

O King, let deeds, not words, speak for me. I know that to thine eyes I am not come to the strength of a man, and seem not fit for fighting; but my sinews are grown strong from protecting my flock. Once, when I my father's sheep was keeping, there came a lion from the wilderness and stole a lamb from among them. I chased the robber and rescued the lamb from his jaws, and when he turned upon me I seized him by the mane, tore his jaws asunder, and slew him. Be not cast down nor afraid,

O King, for I will go against thine adversary and will bring him down, tall and mighty as he is, and thou shalt have great glory.

JONATHAN.

This Goliath is heavily armed, and in complete armor; his head alone exposed.

DAVID.

I care not! I undertake to go! Thy consent, O King!

SAUL.

Go! And God be with thee. If ill befalls thee, I shall mourn for thee as for a beloved son!

JONATHAN.

Then thou shalt wear my armor, David.

DAVID.

Nay, I will meet him with my own weapon, the sling.

JONATHAN and SAUL.

Thy sling?

DAVID.

Aye, and with it I will bring yon boaster to the earth. These stones I picked from the bed of the river. Five—no, one was spent on service.

MICHAL.

(*Coming forward.*) Here it is. I kept it in remembrance. Take it, David, and my prayers go with thee.

VOICE OF GOLIATH.

O Saul, son of Kish, thou craven Benjaminite; I am he who slew thy high priest, and defiled the temple of thy God. Hast thou not a man to avenge thee?

DAVID.

(*A movement of supplication to Heaven; goes up to* C.)

VOICE OF GOLIATH.

How, now, youth, art thou all that Israel dare send to gaze upon me?

DAVID.

I am David of Bethlehem. I dare gaze upon thee. I dare to accept thy challenge.

VOICE OF GOLIATH.

Am I a dog that a boy should come to drive me off with a stick?

DAVID.

Thou comest to me with a sword, and a spear, and a shield. But I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will he deliver thee into my hands, that all the world may know there is a God in Israel.

VOICE OF GOLIATH.

Come near me, child, and I will give thy flesh to the vultures.

DAVID *has business with sling; retreats a few paces; runs rapidly forward swinging sling about his head; discharges it. Thud is heard. Groan from* GOLIATH. DAVID *and all on stage hold picture. Voices off* R., *in despair. Murmurs increase.*

DAVID.

(*As soon as thud is heard quickly runs off* R.)

JONATHAN.

(*Who goes to* C. *at* DAVID'S *exit.*) The stone hath hit its mark!

SAUL.

What sayest thou?

JONATHAN.

Goliath is down.

OMNES.

Dead!

JONATHAN.

And slain by David!

DAVID.

(*Enters with head of* GOLIATH. *Quick curtain. Second picture—all crowd around it —*DAVID *leaves it* C. *and quickly X's to* SAUL.)

(*Third picture—*DAVID *is before* MICHAL; JONATHAN *with* MERAB; SOLDIERS *shouting: Long live* DAVID, *etc., etc.*)

END OF SECOND ACT.

CHARACTERS USED IN THE THIRD ACT.

Saul.....King of Israel

Jonathan.....His Son

Doeg.....An Edomite, Captain of a Thousand

Prince Phalti.

Ozem.....David's Brother

Ahimelech.....A Priest

Michal, Merab, } .....Saul's daughters

Adora.....Waiting Maid to Michal

and

David.....A Captain in Saul's Army

Soldiers, Dancers, Servants and Citizens of Gibeah.

ACT THIRD.

Saul's palace at Gibeah. A room richly furnished with wide veranda at back, reached by a couple of steps running full width of stage; veranda overlooks the city. Arches supported by pillars along L. and R. of stage. Saul's throne L. 2. Entrances made from veranda and R. and L. sides. Couches and the furnishings of the time. Behind Saul's chair and throne is a rack holding javelins, short swords, etc.

A lapse of about two years between acts 2d and 3d.

(*Discovered at rise:* MERAB *on veranda;* MICHAL *and* ADORA, C., *working at coverlet, embroidering.*)

MICHAL.

Adora, thy fingers are nimble; thou canst ply thy needle faster than I. Art thou tired?

ADORA.

Nay, Princess; see, we are nearly finished.

MICHAL.

If thou wilt place a pillow for me, I will rest. (ADORA *arranges pillow and takes up work.*) Thanks, that is nice. Nay, thou shalt do no more. Let us talk.

ADORA.

I can talk and work, too.

MICHAL.

An accomplishment that I have not.

ADORA.

I was taught to work before I could talk.

MICHAL.

And that is why thou art so industrious. 'Twas otherwise with me. Thy labor here is light?

ADORA.

'Tis not labor, but a pleasure, to serve thee, Princess.

MICHAL.

Thou must not say flattering things to me. Flattery is a pleasant nectar. It creates a thirst that nothing else will satisfy.

ADORA.

I meant it sincerely.

MICHAL.

I know, Adora; I spoke but in jest. Thou art happy here?

ADORA.

Happy! It is like a dream.

MICHAL.

It is now two years that David hath been of our household, and so many times did he speak of thy cleverness that I desired to have thee for a companion. Besides, I could talk to thee of him. (*At mention of* DAVID'S *name* MERAB *turns and listens.*) Dost thou not think him changed?

ADORA.

Only as the boy changes to the man. The duties of his new station may change his manner, but the heart of

David will remain the same as when he tended his sheep at Bethlehem.

MICHAL.

True, Adora, and dost know that when I think of David, it is as he was the first day I saw him, the shepherd boy.

ADORA.

And I have always thought of him as he is to-day: a leader among men!

MICHAL.

Thou art very fond of David. (ADORA *starts with work.*) He loves thee, too, and speaks of thee as of a sister.

MERAB.

(*Coming down* R.) Michal, hast thou no other subject for thy conversation?

MICHAL.

No, sister; none that is half so pleasant. Besides, is not David's name on every tongue?

MERAB.

All the more reason that thou shouldst cool thy admiration. I tell thee, child, thou art lacking in modesty.

MICHAL.

Nay, Merab; do not scold. (*Goes to her, puts arms about her waist.*) Confess now, that whilst thou wert on the balcony thy thoughts were of him. (*Runs to veranda.*) See, how gayly the city is decorated! and why? Because our David is to return to-day, again a conquerer against his foes. The people love him because of his service to the King. We love him because—because he is David!

MERAB.

Foolish child!

MICHAL.

And see. (*Taking up embroidered coverlet.*) This coverlet we have made with our own hands. 'Tis for his couch—David's. Dost know the figure?

MERAB.

'Tis the double triangle.

MICHAL.

Aye, but dost thou know its meaning?

MERAB.

No.

MICHAL.

It is David's amulet, the talisman that secures his success. Is it not so, Adora?

ADORA.

Yes, he hath carved it upon all his belongings, even upon his shield, and wears one made of gold about his neck.

MERAB.

(*To* MICHAL.) Thou hast allowed thy mind to become too much occupied with David. It would not please our father, if he should learn of it; neither would it Prince Phalti.

MICHAL.

Prince Phalti?

MERAB.

Thou knowest it is his desire to wed thee, and he hath the consent of our father.

MICHAL.

No, no; it cannot be!

MERAB.

Wouldst thou disregard thy father's wishes?

MICHAL.

In nothing, save the choosing of a husband. In that, I must be consulted. Besides, my father hath promised that I should never be forced to marry, other than the man I love. And I do *not* love Prince Phalti.

MERAB.

Love! What hast thou to do with love?

MICHAL.

Nothing, perhaps; but my heart is very busy with it.

MERAB.

I could lose my patience with thee.

MICHAL.

Do not do so, dear sister, and I will tell thee a great secret. (*Going over to* MERAB.)

MERAB.

A secret?

MICHAL.

Aye, a great secret, and because it is so great—great to me—I will tell thee: *I love.*

MERAB.

Love! You? (*Laughs.*)

MICHAL.

Yes, and am beloved. Canst thou guess by whom?

MERAB.

I am not good at riddles.

MICHAL.

'Tis David.

MERAB.

David! David! He hath dared to make love to thee? (*X'ing* L.)

MICHAL.

Aye, even so; thou knowest David is brave.

MERAB.

He hath no right! At Elah, when our armies were oppressed by the Philistines, and we were reviled by Goliath, our father did promise my hand to the one who would slay the giant.

MICHAL.

And when thou did'st see that the victor was but a simple shepherd-lad, how thou did'st beg him to recall his promise.

MERAB.

Which he *refused* to do.

MICHAL.

Aye, at *thy* request; 'twas David that freed thee.

MERAB.

Because he had the good wit to know that his station would render marriage with the King's daughter impossible, but now——

MICHAL.

Yes, now his station hath improved, and he loves the King's younger daughter.

MERAB.

I tell thee our father will never sanction such a union.

MICHAL.

I do not fear. David returns to-day. Before he went away he gained our father's consent. David can do anything. Why do you oppose me, sister? Thou hast thy

love, Doeg. I love David, have always loved him—aye, I think from the first day I beheld him, a simple shepherd-boy.

MERAB.

I have no patience with thee. (*Going up stage.*)

MICHAL.

No one ever has, with those in love. (*Over to* ADORA.) No one save thee; *thou* hast sympathy for me, Adora. Come, let us go! (*Gathering up work.*)

MERAB.

No, remain; it is most likely Prince Phalti, who is approaching, wishes to see thee. (*Coming down to* R.)

MICHAL.

But I must go and fix my hair.

MERAB.

Think less of thy hair and more of thy duty, child.

MICHAL.

(*Moving a little to* L.) Adora, run thy deft fingers over my head and gather up those unruly strands (ADORA *fixing hair*), for I would not shock the Prince by the sight of my untidiness.

(*Enter* JONATHAN *and* PHALTI L. U. E. *They come* C., PHALTI, C., JONATHAN *at his* R., *a little back;* MERAB, R., MICHAL, L., ADORA, R., *and* MICHAL *a little back.*

PHALTI.

(*Bowing to* MERAB, *then going to* MICHAL.) Princess, I salute thee!

MERAB.

Prince, did success attend thy mission?

PHALTI.

(*Turning and stepping toward* MERAB.) Partially, Princess. (MICHAL *X's over to* JONATHAN.) I have gained a promise of sympathy and aid from the South.

MICHAL.

(*Aside to* JONATHAN.) Hast thou heard from David?

JONATHAN.

Aye, he is but a short distance from the city, and is hourly expected.

PHALTI.

(*Who has been examining the work, left* C. *To* MERAB.) Thy employment?

MERAB.

Nay, Prince; 'tis the work of Michal.

PHALTI.

(*To* MICHAL.) Its purpose, Michal? (MERAB *X's to* L.)

MICHAL.

'Tis a coverlet.

MERAB.

(*With sarcasm.*) For the *warrior* David, who may change to the lover. Thou hadst better be warned, Prince.

MICHAL.

(*Looks sharp at* MERAB.)

MERAB.

Adora, thou may'st assist me. (*Bus. for* ADORA, *who finally follows.*)

MICHAL.

Adora, care for this. (*Handing her the coverlet as she is going.* ADORA *exits reluctantly.*)

PHALTI.

Art thou leaving us, too? I had hoped for a chance to speak with thee.

MICHAL.

Prince Phalti—I—I have matters to arrange; David, you know, is expected.

PHALTI.

(*Looking after her.*) Men have envied me for the station I was born to, for the wealth I have inherited, yet how poor am I. My gold will purchase the empty smile, the insincere friends, the shallow eulogy! But the great, desired love, my gold cannot buy.

JONATHAN.

Thou hast my sympathy, for to no man, other than David, would I more glady entrust Michal's happiness.

PHALTI.

I thank thee, Jonathan. So David returns from another victory. What was the purpose of this last invasion?

JONATHAN.

I do not know. I was away at the time. News was brought me that David had received a command from my father to attack the Philistines at the North, where they were encamped in large numbers. David had at his command but a handful of men. I feared disaster for him and hurried home; would have joined him but my father sternly forbade me.

PHALTI.

I am at a loss to understand the motive for this last attack.

JONATHAN.

(*Moving up to veranda.*) The expedition was a most

dangerous one. I dreaded the result. But again David is victorious.

PHALTI.

'Tis wonderful! No man in all history hath gained so high esteem in so short a time.

JONATHAN.

And well merited! My father is coming. He will be glad to welcome thee; thou wert always a favorite with him.

PHALTI.

(*Looking off. X'ing up to* JONATHAN.) I have served him with my heart. I honor him as our King. (*Looking off.*) But, O Jonathan, how changed; his malady hath sapped his power. My heart grieves with thine.

JONATHAN.

I can no longer hide from myself the awful truth. The noble impulses that made him Israel's just and merciful ruler have disappeared.

PHALTI.

See, that Edomite Doeg hath joined him.

JONATHAN.

Aye, he is now my father's confidential adviser, and his word will carry more than mine.

PHALTI.

And I tell thee, Jonathan, he is a man to be feared. He hath evil in his face.

JONATHAN.

I dislike him, but I am powerless; his influence with my father is great, and grows stronger each day.

PHALTI.

He is a man that would stop at nothing to gain his purpose.

JONATHAN.

Peace! They are here. (*Both move to* R.)

SAUL.

(*Enters, followed by* DOEG. *They come to* C. JONATHAN *and* PHALTI *bow low.* DOEG, *who is at* SAUL'S R., *salutes. X's to royal chair, places* SAUL'S *javelin beside it. Salutes and exits out* L. 2.)

SAUL.

(C.) Jonathan, my son! Greeting, Prince! I was gratified to hear of thy safe return.

PHALTI.

For thy interest in thy servant, I thank thee, O King!

SAUL.

(*X'ing to his chair,* R. 2.) Did success attend thy mission?

PHALTI.

(*In front of* SAUL. JONATHAN *is at* SAUL'S L.) Most gratifying! As thy messenger I was received with all honor by the King of Hamar. And when it was known that I came on an embassy of friendship great was the respect paid me by Toi and his son Joram. Thy name, O King, is held by them in great honor.

SAUL.

And we may purchase from them the implements of war we so sadly need?

PHALTI.

Already their armor makers are at work.

SAUL.

'Tis well; I shall give thee an audience and have thee recount me all thou hast seen.

PHALTI.

And now, if thou wilt grant me leave, O King, I will retire, and return to be present at thy reception of David!

SAUL.

(*At mention of* DAVID'S name, manner changes.) David!

PHALTI.

Have I leave to depart? (*Bowing low.*)

SAUL.

Peace be with thee!

PHALTI.

Jonathan, I salute thee!

JONATHAN.

(*Who is at* SAUL'S L.) Peace to thee, Prince!

PHALTI.

(*Exits* L. 2.)

SAUL.

So they will send us armor. They remember what I once did for them. A man's good deeds do not always die!

JONATHAN.

Good deeds often fall on barren soil, but they never perish. Time fosters them and they bloom forth, bringing gladness unto all men.

SAUL.

(*Petitioner steps forward, handing scroll to* SAUL.) The successor of Nahash, the Ammonite, doth offer fealty to us! That was thy first experience of war, Jonathan.

And nobly didst thou prove thyself. I was proud of thee, my son! When our armies had so severely *smote* the foe, that two of them were not left together, the leaders were brought before me and I did spare their lives, tho' contrary to our customs.

JONATHAN.

'Twas justice tempered with mercy!

SAUL.

Then it was that Israel proclaimed me King. But the displeasure of Jehovah is upon me, and Samuel prophesied long ago that none of my blood should ever reign again! (*Bows his head.*)

JONATHAN.

Grieve not, my father, all may yet be well.

SAUL.

'Tis not for myself I grieve, 'tis that thou, through no fault of thine, shalt never wear the crown and rule upon my throne when I am gone.

JONATHAN.

Father, thou hast many years before thee; lay up for thyself peace of mind. And when Death's angel takes the royal scepter from thy hand, thy son's sorrow will be for the loss of the King, his father, not the crown!

SAUL.

But why should we allow another to usurp thy place? I am the King! Thou art my son, beloved by the people of Israel and Judah. We will gird on our armor and fight for thy rights. Let the High Priest proclaim whom he may. (*Very excited.*)

JONATHAN.

Father!

SAUL.

I tell thee, Jonathan, since Samuel is dead all fear is gone from me. I am stronger than I was, and——

(*Faint sounds of trumpets, cymbals and singing heard, which very gradually increase till* DAVID'S *entrance.*)

SAUL.

Hast thou ever heard the name of my successor?

JONATHAN.

It is said that his name was never proclaimed by the prophet.

SAUL.

Shall I tell thee what fear is in my heart? Aye, the hatred of it doth drive me mad! Listen; canst thou not hear the welcoming blasts of trumpets, the clash of cymbals, the gay voices singing songs of praise? Is it a greeting for the King? No, the King is forgot! *For whom then?*

JONATHAN.

For David, father!

SAUL.

Aye, David! David! *How I have grown to hate that name!*

JONATHAN.

Conquer thy hatred. Thou hast no more loyal subject in all thy realm than David.

SAUL.

Thou art a fool! (*Rising in his chair.*)

JONATHAN.

Father!

SAUL.

I tell thee, Jonathan, this man that thou hast taken to

thy bosom is the serpent that will turn and sting thee. He would make thee but a stepping stone to his ambition.

JONATHAN.

David hath but one thought—to serve Israel and the King!

SAUL.

Go! If David is thy choice, look no more to me.

JONATHAN.

(*Kneels before* SAUL.) Noble father, am I not your loving son?

SAUL.

More loving than loyal.

(DOEG *enters.*)

SAUL.

Go! Thou hast exhausted my patience!

JONATHAN.

(*Bows low, turns and X's, exit* L.)

SAUL.

Stay! What would'st thou say were thy friend David to usurp thy place and reign over thee?

JONATHAN.

(*At entrance, turns.*) If such be the will of Jehovah I will rejoice and serve him as loyally as I serve thee, my father. (*Exits.*)

DOEG.

(*Who has remained back till* JONATHAN*'s exit. Comes before* SAUL.) David is entering the city gates.

SAUL.

Thus have our plans failed, and recoiled upon our heads. The man we hoped to send to his death re-

turns, again a victor, and instead of mock lamentations we must smile and rejoice.

DOEG.

The plan would not have failed but for the interference of the Priest Ahimelech.

SAUL.

Ahimelech warned David!

DOEG.

Aye, he learned of the plot, and sent a messenger, who overtook him before he reached the Philistines.

SAUL.

Command two soldiers to go in search of Ahimelech. Bring him before me. If he refuses, make him a prisoner.

DOEG.

Thy command shall be obeyed, O King.

SAUL.

Did'st thou warn the enemy of David's approach?

DOEG.

I sent a message to them, giving full particulars, but being warned, he did so divide his forces and attacked them from all sides with such fierce assault that panic seized the Philistines and they fled, leaving half their number dead.

SAUL.

If I did not hate, I could love him for his deeds! Why dost thou hate him?

DOEG.

It is my duty. I know that he is thy enemy.

SAUL.

Enemy! Ah, true! And when he is before me I hate him most; 'tis then I long to thrust him through.

(*Flourish of trumpets. Increase of voices.*)

SAUL.

Hark! The trumpets sound his approach. Away, and make ready the guard!

(DOEG *exits.*)

SAUL.

Can it be that the man that I would slay is the one selected to succeed me? (*Flourish.* SAUL *goes up veranda.*) What a sight! How it tingles the blood! Again I see my younger self in the man I would destroy. How gracefully he sits his steed, man and horse one, unconscious of the gaze of the throng (*coming down*), yet I would that he were dead! Why is it that I am tormented with this man? (*Sinks on couch. Pause.*) Samuel, why did'st thou desert me! (*Sinks head in hands.*)

MICHAL.

(*Enters with armful of lilies, followed by* ADORA. *Goes toward veranda. As she turns to speak to* ADORA, *sees her father. Hands flowers over to* ADORA, *who goes on veranda.* MICHAL *goes and kneels beside* SAUL.)

MICHAL.

Father!

SAUL.

(*Raising his head.*) Ah, Michal, my daughter!

MICHAL.

I fear thou art not well.

SAUL.

And would'st thou care?

MICHAL.

Father, how canst thou ask? Thou knowest that I love thee.

SAUL.

I spoke but idly, for thou wert always my favorite, and understood me best. Art thou happy?

MICHAL.

Aye, father, so happy! Have not my prayers been answered?

SAUL.

What prayers?

MICHAL.

I prayed that he would return unharmed.

SAUL.

David! And thou dost love him so?

MICHAL.

More than life.

SAUL.

Even were he thy father's enemy?

MICHAL.

Thy enemy! Impossible! He doth love thee. There is none so noble as David, save my brother. (*Flourish of trumpets.*) He is here, within our court. I'll run and shower him with flowers. (*Runs and takes flowers from* ADORA. *Bus. of throwing them from balcony.*)

(*Business:* DOEG *enters; a guard has been placed on King's entrance—four in all—is placed at each pillar.* OZEM *at the one,* L. C.*; balance of guard stand* R. *and* L. *of throne.* DOEG *at* SAUL'S L.)

SAUL.

(*To* DOEG.) This joy, this gladness, at David's return. Is it real?

DOEG.

Nay, O King. 'Tis but fleeting enthusiasm. David with a master's hand hath appealed to their vanities.

OZEM.

(*To* ADORA, *speaking in low tone, but holding his position as soldier on guard.*) Adora!

ADORA.

(*After giving flowers to* MICHAL, *has seated herself on steps of veranda.*) Yes, Ozem.

OZEM.

(*To* ADORA.) Canst thou not say the word and make me happy?

SAUL.

Think you that my vision hath been distorted; that, after all, he may be loyal?

DOEG.

Nay, O King! Thou art right in thy judgment of this man. Other eyes than mine have seen his duplicity. His homage to thee is but a show.

ADORA.

Ozem, I will try and make thee a good wife.

OZEM.

Bless thee, Adora.

(*Grand flourish.*)

DOEG.

(*To* SAUL.) He is here!

SAUL.

I will not remain to receive him. I will not speak words

of thanks and welcome to the man I hate! Come! (*Rises.*)

JONATHAN.

(*Enters and goes to* SAUL. *Kneels.*) Noble father, David hath entered the palace, and is preparing to come before thee.

SAUL.

Then canst thou receive the serpent, for I will have none of him. Away!

JONATHAN.

If the King should slight the man that hath served him so well, it would be remarked by all Israel.

SAUL.

I care not! Am I not the King?

JONATHAN.

I plead with thee, the King, for what I know to be right.

SAUL.

Enough! I'll hear no more. Thou art a rebellious son. Lead on! (*Exits, followed by* DOEG *and guard.*)

(*As* SAUL *exits enter* PHALTI.)

PHALTI.

(*Comes down to* JONATHAN.) The King hath withdrawn?

JONATHAN.

Aye.

PHALTI.

And will not receive David?

JONATHAN.

I besought him in vain. His dislike for David hath so increased that he no longer tries to hide it.

(*Business:* PHALTI *leaves* JONATHAN and *returns to back stage.* JONATHAN *stands* L. *of throne. Singers and dancers come on. All work* E. E. *for* DAVID'S *entrance. Shouts of welcome,* "Hail to David!" "Elah's hero!" *etc. First dancers come on, then others slowly. When dance is half over* DAVID *and his guard enter.*)

DAVID.

(*Enters, gives general salute, comes direct to* C. *Sees vacant throne. Shows his disappointment.* JONATHAN *comes forward to him with hands outstretched.*) Jonathan!

JONATHAN.

Welcome, David!

(*Business: Music.* DAVID *and* JONATHAN, *back to audience.* JONATHAN'S *arm is about* DAVID'S *shoulder.* DAVID *dismisses dancers. Characters withdraw, so by time of* DAVID'S *scene with* JONATHAN *stage nearly clear.*)

DAVID.

Daughters and men of Israel and Judah, I thank thee for thy greeting. In thy welcome to me thou must not forget the King, whose servant I am. Retire, I pray thee.

(*They exit shouting. Shouts dying away as* DAVID *continues.*)

DAVID.

Jonathan, I desire to see the King.

JONATHAN.

David, my father hath retired. I am sorry, but he refused to give thee audience.

DAVID.

I promised my officers they should receive the King's own thanks. Their valor deserves no less.

JONATHAN.

I will again appeal to my father. Thy wish shall yet be granted.

DOEG.

(*Enters* L. U. E.) The King doth refuse thee audience.

DAVID.

(*Turns away.*)

DOEG.

Thy success would have been greater had'st thou failed to return.

DAVID.

(*In fury.*) Leave me or speak with more respect.

DOEG.

Who art thou, that I should approach with bended knee?

DAVID.

I am David! I serve Israel and the King, as an Israelite. Thy service to Israel is paid for in gold. Thou dost pander for the King's favor with lies!

DOEG.

And thou dost sing thy own praises before the people to gain their favor, putting thyself before the King thou dost pretend to serve!

DAVID.

Thou liest!

DOEG.

Thy place is back with the sheep. I have warned the King of thy treacherous ambition.

DAVID.

Thou lying dog of an Edomite! (*Draws sword and makes a start.*)

JONATHAN.

Hold, David! Do not stain thy sword with his venomous blood.

DAVID.

(*Turns up stage,* L.)

JONATHAN.

If thou hast no duties here, go!

DOEG.

Prince Jonathan, I serve the King, and would serve thee better than the man that doth steal thy place in the hearts of the people.

JONATHAN.

I know the worth of thy services. Go!

DOEG.

(*Cringes and exits.*)

JONATHAN.

David, thou hast much to bear! Hast thou seen Michal?

DAVID.

Yes, I saw her first of all. She came to greet me on the way. Oh, Jonathan, I love thy sister, and now the insults of this Edomite lose their sting, because Michal will today become my wife. Ah, Jonathan, promise me thy feelings toward me will never change!

JONATHAN.

Never, for I know thee, David! Aye, and know the secret that thou hast locked in thy breast, for fear it should wound thy friend.

MERAB.

(*Enters and overhears scene.*)

DAVID.

My secret! What dost thou mean?

JONATHAN.

Thou art to be King.

DAVID.

Prince Jonathan, make me not a traitor. Such a thought hath never entered my mind. I swear it.

JONATHAN.

I believe thee. But from the day that thou did'st come to our camp, I knew it.

DAVID.

Knew that I was to be King? To take thy place! To rob thee, my best and dearest friend! No, Jonathan; sooner would I, to-day, leave thee and all I hold so dear, and return to my sheep upon the hills, than stand a moment between thee and thine inheritance.

JONATHAN.

Nay, David, thou dost not rob me. 'Tis the will of Jehovah. The prophet Samuel anointed thee. Thou art destined to rule, and I glory in Heaven's choice, as will all Israel.

DAVID.

But the anointing of which thou speakest was not to make me King. 'Twas but the favor of the good prophet, that I might become a wise and valiant man.

JONATHAN.

So you thought—— But my heart hath discerned the truth. Thou wilt one day know it, too.

DAVID.

And knowing all this, thou did'st take me by the hand and place thy mantle about me! Noble Jonathan! What do I not owe thee!

JONATHAN.

The nobility of thy heart hath many times repaid me! Speak no more of it. Now I will go to my father and prevail with him to grant thee audience. (*Going* R.)

DAVID.

Jonathan! (*Jonathan turns.*) My friend!

JONATHAN.

My brother!

DAVID.

Thro' life!

JONATHAN.

Thro' death!

DAVID and JONATHAN.

Thro' eternity! (*Picture for a second.* JONATHAN *exits* R.)

MERAB.

(*Coming down* L.) David!

DAVID.

(*David turns; comes forward and kisses her hand.*) Ah, Princess! Greeting!

MERAB.

Thou art more welcome, David, than the tidings that told of thy victory.

DAVID.

I thank thee.

MERAB.

(*Dropping on couch,* R.) I have been greatly concerned for thy safety, David!

DAVID.

Princess?

MERAB.

My interest in thee began when thy youthful valor put our army to shame, and it hath increased with thy advancement. When I hear the multitude hail thee as their hero I rejoice with them.

DAVID.

I never thought, Princess, that thou wert interested in me except for my service to thy father, the King.

MERAB.

That was thy mistake. Wilt thou not sit by me? (DAVID *does so.*) David, thou art destined for greater things.

DAVID.

Princess, there can be nothing greater than to serve Israel—to serve the King.

MERAB.

The King doth not value thy devotion.

DAVID.

I do my duty, with no thought of reward.

MERAB.

Thou hast ambition?

DAVID.

'Tis not ambition. My one thought is for Israel!

MERAB.

I could reconcile my father to thee! The knowledge that another not of his own blood shall reign hath embittered him. Thou art the one he regards with suspicion.

DAVID.

No act of mine could have engendered such a thought. 'Tis the work of lying cowards that surround him.

MERAB.

Thou art beloved by the people. Aye, even more than my brother Jonathan. David, I would see thee King!

DAVID.

Princess! (*Rises quickly.*)

MERAB.

(*Catching him by the arm.*) I love thee, David!

DAVID.

Thou lovest me!

MERAB.

With the passionate love of my soul. If thou had'st not allowed thy insipid fancy for Michal to blind thee, thou would'st have seen it. I can give thee all that thou desireth. My love would give thee strength and power. Let me go to my father and plead with him. When he knows that I am to be thy wife he will become reconciled; thy way will be smooth. (*Throwing her arms about his neck.*) David! David! I love thee!

DAVID.

(*Disengaging her arms.*) Princess! Merab! No more, I pray you. Forget thy words, as I will. Thou knowest that my love is given to thy sister Michal. And not for ten thousand kingdoms would I yield to thee.

MERAB.

Thou dost scorn my love?

DAVID.

Nay, Princess, I honor thee highly. But I love thy sister Michal.

MERAB.

My father will never consent to the union.

DAVID.

His consent hath been given.

(*Enter* JONATHAN, MICHAL *and* DOEG. DOEG *X's to* MERAB.)

DAVID.

(*Bows to Princess and X's up to* MICHAL, C.)

DOEG.

(*To* MERAB.) Thou art troubled?

MERAB.

Thou sayest that thou lovest me?

DOEG.

Hath not my devotion given thee proof?

MERAB.

That man I now hate. The day that he is driven from our Court I will be thy wife. (*Exits,* L.)

DOEG.

(*Exits with* MERAB.)

JONATHAN.

The King will receive thee and thy officers with honor. I go to prepare thy men.

DAVID.

I thank thee, Jonathan.

MICHAL.

I have longed to see and speak with thee. Hast thou thought of me, David?

DAVID.

Thought of thee! Every moment that I have been from

thee thy sweet face hath been before me. Had I been free to follow the impulse of my heart I would have left glory behind and rushed to thee, folding thee in my arms (*Bus.*) as I do now.

MICHAL.

I love thee, David!

DAVID.

There is nothing thou could'st say that would sound half so sweet.

MICHAL.

I have loved thee since—since—well, I cannot tell just when.

DAVID.

My love for thee began, dearest, the day that I first saw thee and looked into thine eyes.

MICHAL.

Yes, yes! The day thou did'st gain the rose. Dost thou remember, David?

DAVID.

Do I remember? Aye, behind this breastplate now, over my heart, it lies, withered, yet fragrant with memory of that first day.

MICHAL.

During thy absence I have prayed that no harm should befall thee. For thou art my life, my King, my David!

DAVID.

And thou, my Princess, thou art mine! Mine, my Michal. (*Flourish. Kisses her.*) I must leave thee now and return to my men. (*Leading her up back, with his arm about her.*)

MICHAL.

To-day our father will announce our nuptials?

DAVID.

He hath so promised. Two years have I waited and now thou art mine at last.

(*Flourish is heard.* MERAB *enters and sits on couch.*)

DAVID.

(*Kisses her. Takes both her hands; kisses them.*) Mine at last! (*Exit.*)

MICHAL.

(*Stands looking after him, till* MERAB *speaks.*)

MERAB.

So, so! A secret meeting with thy lover.

MICHAL.

Nay, sister, not secret, for to-day all Israel will know I am to be his wife.

MERAB.

This David, that thou dost love, is an enemy to our father.

MICHAL.

Thou dost speak falsely, and with bitterness. Thou knowest David is loyal.

MERAB.

Nevertheless he shall not wed thee. (*X'ing,* R.)

MICHAL.

Thou canst not prevent it. Our father hath given his word.

MERAB.

Then I shall counsel him to withdraw it. David is a traitor to me and to his King.

MICHAL.

Merab, how can'st thou say it! Thou dost speak in

spite. 'Tis thy—— (*Looks at* MERAB.) Thou dost love David!

MERAB.

Love! Ah! Ha, ha! I hate him!

MICHAL.

Hate, that is born of thy wicked jealousy. (*Over, and kneels before* MERAB.) Merab, my sister, thou canst not be so cruel. Thou knowest how much I love him. Say thou wilt not do it.

MERAB.

I will do all I have said.

MICHAL.

Then will I appeal to our brother Jonathan.

(*Business: Grand flourish. Enter* SAUL *extras. Two heralds enter; stand one on each side of arch,* L. U. E. *With the others enter* PHALTI *and* ADORA. PHALTI *X's before Princesses, salutes them, then X's and takes place,* L. 2. ADORA *takes her position,* L. *of throne. Heralds blow a flourish. Enter* JONATHAN *at head of house guard. His men divide, a man standing guard at each arch at the back and along the* L. OZEM *is at the extreme* L. JONATHAN *takes his position* L. 2. MICHAL *X's over to him, and sits on couch* L. *Flourish.* DOEG *enters with body-guard, and arranges in two columns, facing each other, and diagonally from the throne to* L. U. E. *Double flourish.* SAUL *enters attended by his armor bearer and in the rear of him two Nubians. He X's direct to his throne.*

Then follows music for DAVID'S *entrance, as body-guard fall in and take their position at the* R. *of the throne.* DOEG *is at* SAUL'S L. *hand. Flourish. Double flourish.*

OMNES.

(*Shouts outside of "Hail to* DAVID, *Elah's hero," etc. Outside barely discernible is heard singing.*)

DAVID.

(*Enters with officers; gives general salute to assembly; goes direct to, and kneels before* SAUL.) Thy servant hath returned, and would do homage to his King!

SAUL.

I—I—greet thee! Rise!

(*Singing has become louder and is taken up by those on stage,* "DAVID *hath slain his tens of thousands," etc.*)

DOEG.

(*Pause for song. Aside to* SAUL.) Canst thou distinguish the words, O King?

DAVID.

(*Motions to* JONATHAN, *who goes up and gives signal for silence.*)

SAUL.

(*Anger increases as he listens to song.*) Thy admirers have ascribed to thee tens of thousands; to me they have ascribed but thousands! What more canst thou wish but my throne?

DAVID.

Pardon, O King! the singers had no thought to offend. The foolish words of the song have no meaning.

SAUL.

How am I to be sure of that?

DAVID.

Never doubt, O King, that thy servant, David is loyal to thee; and honors thee as the appointed King of Israel.

SAUL.

What would'st thou have of me?

DAVID.

Thy commands have been obeyed, but only a third of our number have returned. Every man fought for the glory of Israel. And I did assure them of thy personal thanks. They are here.

SAUL.

And when was it that Saul ever failed to appreciate the valor of his army?

DAVID.

Never, O King!

SAUL.

Yet thou dost assure them that *thou* wilt *obtain* what is theirs already! Fie! Thou dost pander for thy personal gain!

DAVID.

Thou dost me wrong, O King! All the reward I claim for myself is the fulfillment of thy promise—thy daughter Michal.

MERAB.

(*Rising and coming* c.) That cannot be!

MICHAL and JONATHAN.

Merab!

DAVID.

(*Steps back—astounded.*)

MERAB.

(*Before* SAUL.) Noble father, thou wilt not welcome to thy household one that thou knowest to be thy enemy?

MICHAL.

Merab, thou dost speak with envy.

MERAB.

(C.) To become the King's son-in-law is a step to further his own advancement. The love that he hath sworn to thee was rejected by me.

DAVID.

(L. C.) Princess Merab, thy words are false!

JONATHAN.

(*Stepping forward, and taking* MICHAL.) Shame upon thee, Merab! Thy words are but the echo of thy jealous spirit! (*Leads* MICHAL L.)

SAUL.

No more! (*To* DAVID.) Thou hast divided my house against me. I'll bring it to an end. Prince Phalti! (PHALTI *steps forward.*) Thou hast long desired my daughter's hand—take her, and see that thou dost keep her to thyself!

JONATHAN.

Father, thou canst not forswear thy solemn promise given to David.

PHALTI.

I beg of thee, O King; pause in thy command! Thy daughter's heart is in the keeping of a man more worthy than I!

MICHAL.

O noble father, unsay thy words! I love David! (*Runs and clings to* DAVID.)

SAUL.

I have spoken.

DAVID.

(c.) O King, art thou so cruel? Do not sully thy name by so unjust an act. Thou hast allowed lying council to warp thy better judgment. I, thy servant, David, plead to thee for justice!

AHIMELECH.

(*Noise outside. Is brought on between two guards.*)

SAUL.

I'll hear no more; she shall be wife to Prince Phalti!

MICHAL.

(*Rushes across to* JONATHAN.) Oh, my brother, canst thou do nothing?

(*Business:* JONATHAN *passes* MICHAL *to* PHALTI. *She weeps on couch. As* AHIMELECH *reaches* C., *general exclamation from assembly.*)

AHIMELECH.

My lord, the King! Why am I, a priest of God, subjected to such indignity?

SAUL.

Because it is my will!

AHIMELECH.

Thou hast transcended thy rule. Over the Priesthood thou hast no power.

SAUL.

Thou hast allowed thyself to interfere with thy King's affairs.

AHIMELECH.

Thy words are not true!

SAUL.

And amongst the people thou hast spoken of this David as the favorite of Samuel.

AHIMELECH.

Thy words are not true!

SAUL.

Thou settest him before me in the hearts of the people.

AHIMELECH.

And who is so faithful of all thy servants as David?

SAUL.

Dost thou dare to give me the lie?

AHIMELECH.

Thou hast attributed to thy servant deeds that thou knowest to be false.

SAUL.

I will have thee scourged! Thou mischievous priest!

JONATHAN.

Forbear, O King! Such an act would blacken thy name forever!

SAUL.

Doeg, obey my commands!

DOEG.

(*Makes move to obey.*)

DAVID.

Back, thou hireling! Else I will call on the men of Israel and Judah to restrain thee! (c.) Let thy anger be against me, O King! but not against this priest!

SAUL.

I know thee not.

DAVID.

I am David, the shepherd boy, that at the Vale of Elah thou did'st take by the hand—I loved thee—and despite thy unjust anger against me, I love and honor thee still.

SAUL.

Thou liest! Thou would'st start mutiny among my people!

DAVID.

If in deed or thought, thou canst prove treason against me, let my life be forfeited. Ask of these comrades—officers of thy army—by whose side I have fought many battles. (*Turns to soldiers.*) Men of Israel and Judah, is it not true that I have served the King well?

SOLDIERS.

Aye! Aye!
Long live David!
Long live our captain!

DAVID.

The best that was in me, have I not given to Israel?

SAUL.

(*Hurls javelin at* DAVID.)

(*Business:* ADORA, *who is at* R. *of King, has been intently watching* SAUL—*simultaneous with his action of throwing javelin—springs forward with a cry,* "David!" *receives javelin, facing* SAUL. *An exclamation from all.* MICHAL *screams and sinks her face in her hands.* DAVID *wheels around in time to catch* ADORA. OZEM, *after other exclamations, utters smothered cry. His javelin is seen to tremble in his hand.*

ADORA.

(*In* DAVID'S *arms, after his business.*) 'Twas for thee, David! (*Dies.*)

OZEM.

(*Lets his spear drop. Comes forward with his arms outstretched.* DAVID *places* ADORA *in his arms. He turns and exits,* L. U. E., *followed by maidens.*

JONATHAN.

(*Motions to guard behind* AHIMELECH. *They exit with* AHIMELECH.)

DAVID.

Oh, thou wicked King! Now art thou fallen, indeed!

SAUL.

Silence!

DAVID.

No longer will I keep silent! but tell thee, thou art accursed!

SAUL.

Accursed!

DAVID.

Here, thou sittest on the throne, the choice of God and the people. Thy opportunities have been great. How hast thou used them? In thy unholy anger thou hast stained thy hands with the blood of the innocent. Thou mightest have been the light of Israel, but thy heart is black!

SAUL.

Out of my sight! Go!

DAVID.

Gladly will I leave thy God-forsaken presence. I would sooner once more be a simple shepherd on the hills of Bethlehem than live longer in thy sight!

DOEG.

(*Approaching.*) Silence thy tongue, else I will deliver thee to the guard!

DAVID.

Away from me, thou cursed, lying, crawling thing! It is thy duplicity that hath kindled the King's hate against me. (*To soldiers.*) Men of Israel, no longer can I lead thee! (*Throws off sword.*)

SOLDIERS.

Thou shalt not go!
Slay the dog of an Edomite!
We'll have no other leader but thee!

MICHAL.

(*Runs to* DAVID. MERAB *stops her.*) David! David!

DAVID.

My love is thine forever! Jonathan, protect her!

JONATHAN.

(*Takes* MICHAL *from* MERAB.) David, stay——

DAVID.

No more! No more! My cup is full!

SAUL.

Away, before I kill thee!

DAVID.

I do not fear for my life, O King! Thou art living out thy destiny! Thy sins have placed a cloud upon thy mind! Thy evil spirit rules thee! Thou hast wronged me beyond endurance! I love thy daughter, Michal, better than my life! (MICHAL *calls* David! David! *and falls.*) Thy son, only as one man can love another. Pity for thy madness alone saves thee. Let it not reach the ears of

Askelon. Tell it not in Gath, else the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice, and their armies will come upon thee and encamp here in thy palace. Farewell! Farewell! (*Rushes off* L.)

SAUL.

(*Spellbound.*)

(*Not a soul moves; everybody spellbound.*)

Quick curtain.

END OF THIRD ACT.

CHARACTERS USED IN THE FOURTH ACT.

Scene 1.

The Witch of Endor.

David.

Saul.

Doeg.

Samuel.

Scene 2.

Saul.

Ozem.

The High Priest.

Eliah.

Prince Phalti.

Shammah.

Guard.

Michal.

Merab.

and

David, who becomes the King.

Soldiers, Servants, and People from the City of Gibeah.

ACT FOURTH.

SCENE I.—Cave of Witch of Endor. David discovered asleep on bundle of straw.

WITCH.

(*Discovered hovering over fire,* R., *swaying to and fro, muttering; rises, gets sticks of kindling from back; throws wood on fire, then peers in kettle; mutters.*) All of no avail! I have tried, and tried! Yet thou wilt give no sign. (*Goes to* C.; *sits for a minute, then gets up; raises her hands above her.*) Ahmuluda! Ahmuluda! If only thy spirit, of all the countless hordes that hover about, would come to me! I have waited, waited! Years have passed! But thou wilt not come! (*Rocks to and fro, muttering* Ahmuluda! Ahmuluda! *Suddenly stops; looks towards* L., *then moves back in shadow.*)

DAVID.

(*Rising up, looks about him, then X's to* L. *Looks out.*) The storm hath passed. I must continue my journey.

WITCH.

(*Coming* R. C.) Ha! Ha! Journey! Hast thou a journey?

DAVID.

Aye, good woman.

WITCH.

The journeys in life are short. They do not tire us. 'Tis the long, long journey of death that gives no rest. Listen! Canst thou hear?

DAVID.

I hear nothing.

WITCH.

Listen! (*Wind effect.*) Now?

DAVID.

'Tis nothing but the wind.

WITCH.

Nay, the wind hath no sound. 'Tis the cry of the restless spirits that thou hearest. Screech! Screech! No rest! No rest for their wearied souls! The wind bears them on; like the ceaseless waters. The moon doth gaze upon them as they pass, but they can not tarry in their endless flight, but must forever on. On! Ha! Ha! (*Wails.*) Ahmuluda! Ahmuluda!

DAVID.

Who is Ahmuluda, that thou dost call upon?

WITCH.

One who was as fair and straight as thou. The spirits took him away from me. Long years have I waited, but he will not come.

DAVID.

Thy son?

WITCH.

Son? Son? Aye, that was it! My son! Ahmuluda! Ahmuluda!

DAVID.

He is dead?

WITCH.

So thou dost call it. But I know that he is there. (*Points off* L.) Out there in the wind, with the countless numbers.

DAVID.

Hast thou the power to recall the dead?

WITCH.

Many have obeyed my will; but not Ahmuluda.

DAVID.

Thou hast a "familiar spirit?"

WITCH.

Sh! Sh! Thou should'st not speak so, for thou wilt imperil my life. Know ye not, that Saul hath banished from the land, all who hold communion with the dead?

DAVID.

Thou need'st not fear of me, for I like thee, am hunted down by Saul, with a price upon my life.

WITCH.

And was in the gloomy forest that thou did'st seek concealment?

DAVID.

I was journeying from the wilderness of Engedi, on my way to the Palace.

WITCH.

There thou wilt meet thy enemy, the King!

DAVID.

No longer shall I fear. For months have I hidden from him. Now I am going back, back to the woman that I love. She has sent a messenger to me, who told me that she mourns; that she is in sore distress and needs my protection. 'Tis the King's own daughter; but were he fifty times a King my heart would obey her call. Oh, if thou canst divine the future, tell me, I beseech, if hope and happiness are in store for me!

WITCH.

Thou art brave. Thou dost well to no longer fear Saul. The spirits that hover about thee are all powerful.

Thy years are many. Thou art to be a glory. Thou art to be—Sh! Sh! (*X's to* L. *Listens.*) Two are coming—their steps are directed here; they may be spies, sent by the King to hunt me. (*Listens.*) No! No! They come with tormented souls! They come to seek consolation from the Witch of Endor! Ha! Ha! (*Pause; sound of gravel rolling down run* L.)

DOEG.

(*Outside.*) This is the place; aye, here is the opening.

DAVID.

(*Aside.*) That voice! 'Tis Doeg, the Edomite!

WITCH.

Hide! Hide! (*Motions him to crevice in rock* L.)

DOEG.

(*Coming down run.*) A fitting habitation, truly. (*Enters, followed by* SAUL.)

SAUL.

And is it here, that the woman thou toldst me of resides?

DOEG.

Aye, and it is said that she can recall the souls of the dead, and at her command their spirits speak.

(*Business: During dialogue* DAVID *has glided to opening, assisted by the* WITCH, *and he makes his escape. At the noise of his exit* DOEG *and* SAUL *are startled.*)

DOEG.

What was that? (*Draws sword, and rushes to opening* L.)

WITCH.

(*Stands before him, barring the way.*) Ha! Ha! Ha! Who art thou that doth draw thy sword so fiercely?

DOEG.

We seek a woman who hath a familiar spirit.

WITCH.

Then go thy way and seek her. Thou wilt not find her here. (*Chuckling, X's to* R.)

DOEG.

Art thou not the Witch of Endor?

WITCH.

(*Turns on him fiercely.*) I am no witch! Thou knowest that the King hath driven all whom thou dost call witches from his realm! Art thou spies, that intrude thyselves, like thieves in the night, upon me? This abode doth give me shelter. I trouble no man. Away with thee! Thou canst not entrap me! (*Goes* R.)

DOEG.

We mean thee no harm, but come to thee in honesty, and will reward thee well for thy service.

WITCH.

I have no service to render thee!

DOEG.

Thou liest! For thou art the Witch of Endor!

WITCH.

Lies! Lies! Lies! Well, thou shouldst know, for thy life is built on lies! Thy tongue hath never spoken truth to any man! The spirits that gather about thee are devil's imps! Away! I would have none of thee!

DOEG.

Cease thy mouthings, else I—— (*Starts.*)

WITCH.

Lay but thy hand upon me, and thou wilt learn the Witch of Endor's power!

SAUL.

(*X'ing to her.*) Then thou art the Witch of Endor?

WITCH.

What if I am so called? I do not practice what is forbidden by the King.

SAUL.

Bring to me the soul of one departed, that I may seek council of him and I will make thee rich.

WITCH.

How do I know that thou wilt not give information against me?

SAUL.

I swear that no harm shall come to thee.

WITCH.

Thou canst speak the truth; but the other—(*Indicating* DOEG.) Lies! Lies! Lies! And his word is worthless!

SAUL.

(*To* DOEG.) Wait for me at the mouth of the cave.

DOEG.

(*Starts* L.)

WITCH.

(*Following him over.*) Hear me, ere thou dost depart! The lies that thou hast used to gain thy ends will become the lashes that will drive thee from thy estate! So speaks the Witch of Endor! Ha! Ha! Ha!

DOEG.

(*Exits.*)

WITCH.

(*Turns; regards* SAUL *intently for a second; then points her finger at him.*) Hast thou faith?

SAUL.

Faith!

WITCH.

(*Incanting.*) Around thee the shadows are dark, with sparks of brightness. O'er thy mind a veil of gloom hath rested. Thy life hath been one of turmoil!

SAUL.

True! True! Go on!

WITCH.

Let me learn of thy past, before we seek the future. (*X's to cauldron.*)

SAUL.

'T'were better for the past to slumber. 'Tis of the future I would know.

WITCH.

Silence! While the spirits gather about the sacred wand. (*Bus. of stirring with wand,* L.)

"Come, ye spirits; come ye hither;
Tell us whence and tell us whither,
Out of the darkness—the silence of death,
Come hither, ye spirits, as when ye had breath."

(*Slight blue flame shows.*) So faint they appear that the spirit that doth control me can scarcely discern. Ah! What is this? (*Starting back.*) Their forms come erect. (*Turns and gazes at* SAUL; *fiercely.*) Thou art not of common blood. Thou art Saul, the King!

SAUL.

How dost thou know?

WITCH.

The spirits come to thee, straight, as they walked in life! And thus they do, only in the presence of Kings!

(*Pleading.*) O King, I have never despised thee, tho' thou hast banished me from thy land! Hast thou sought me to wreak punishment upon me?

SAUL.

Thou hast my solemn word that no harm shall come to thee. I am Saul, King of Israel! Wretched, deserted of God! Dreams reveal nothing to me! My kingdom is tottering beneath my feet! Our enemy is encamped, even at my palace door! I have come to beg of thee, that thou wilt use thy gifts, and bring to me the spirit of one I would name!

WITCH.

(*Rising.*) His name?

SAUL.

Samuel.

WITCH.

(*Bus.*) Then let thy mind dwell on his name. Thy thought be of thy desires. I invoke. The incense I burn. The fumes penetrate the dead souls' sphere, and signals to them our desires. Around the wand they gather. (*Color bus.*) Unseen, save by the gifted eye. (*Chants.*)

"To this earth worm trembling here
Dreaded shadows swift appear;
Peace or strife, joy or woe,
Take thy form, and let him know."

(*Flame bursts forth.*) Hark! A voice doth speak! (*Stares before her as though addressing the unseen.*) Beyond the power of mortal call, thou sayest, and cannot answer to our will. (*Bus. of coming out of trance.*) O King, the task that thou hast set me is beyond thy servant's power!

SAUL.

(*In passion.*) Thou hast lied! Thou hast no power! Thou hast imposed upon me!

WITCH.

Forbear thy anger, O King, till thou hast heard me. The one that thou desired was of holy life. No evil hath he ever done. He sits on high and answers the will of One! (*Indicating above.*)

SAUL.

Aye, true, Samuel, "The asked of God." Impious the thought that creatures like us could summon to our need so holy a one. Here, woman, take thy gold. (*Throws purse to her.*) Practice no more thy unlawful art. The King doth leave thee as he came—a forsaken man. (*Starts to go; pauses; head drops to breast. Mutters to himself,* Samuel, Samuel; *then raises his head as in prayer, with deep emotion.*) Samuel, thou prophet of Israel, from thy secure seat above, look down upon the child for whose disobedience thou did'st withdraw thy hand, that was my strength. From off my mind the cloud hath lifted; weak and helpless now am I. (*Kneels.*) Grant me one word of comfort; one word of pity! Samuel! Samuel! (*Bows head in hands.*)

(*Business: A slight pause. A faint smoke appears at the* R. *of* SAUL.)

WITCH.

(*Startled; utters exclamation; points her finger toward smoke.*) O King! O King! (SAUL *raises his head.*) Canst thou perceive?

SAUL.

(*Raises up; gazes in direction.*) I see nothing.

WITCH.

Before thee stands a figure that comes through no art of mine! (*Terrified.*)

SAUL.

What form is he of?

WITCH.

An old man, clothed in white. His face of holy-light. His gaze doth rest on thee with pity and with sorrow.

SAUL.

(*Half aside.*) Samuel, hast thou come to me?

WITCH.

He moves from thee. Canst thou see, O King! There he glides, now rests at base of the rock! (*Figure becomes distinct.*) 'Tis a god come to earth! (*In great fear, crouches down* R., *face covered.*)

(*Business: Apparition gradually becomes distinct, when at full view.*)

SAUL.

Samuel! (*Falls down before figure, with hands outstretched in supplication.*)

SAMUEL.

Saul, why hast thou disturbed me?

SAUL.

To seek thy counsel, Prophet of Israel. Since thou hast departed, my heart is sick with grief. I am powerless.

SAMUEL.

It is vain of thee to seek counsel of me. Thou hast reaped the reward of thy disobedience. Thy rule is o'er. Thy dominion doth go to David. Hear me, Saul! To-morrow thy earthly life doth end. Thou and thy sons will be with me! Farewell! Farewell! (*Vision dissolves.*)

SAUL.

Samuel! Samuel! One question more! Do not leave me! Gone! Gone! I am alone! Alone!

(*Lights out. Change of scene. Or, as* SAUL *sinks to the ground, the* WITCH *gets a goblet, comes to him, kneels before him.*) Drink, O King! It will give thee strength. (*Picture and change* L.)

SCENE II. Exterior of Saul's palace. Palace L. 2, with steps leading down in front. At back L. two heavy gates supported by buttress. At change of scene trumpet is sounded; guards throw open gates; Ozem enters through gate, accompanied by two soldiers. Simultaneously Eliah enters from rear of palace with a dozen of house-guards; comes to C. Ozem and Eliah salute.

OZEM.

Thou art to hasten to the eastern wall with thy men. It is our weakest point. There the enemy are gathered in great numbers.

ELIAH.

From whom dost thou bear these commands?

OZEM.

Prince Phalti. Since Doeg's death he hath assumed command.

ELIAH.

And I would sooner serve the Prince than Doeg. (*Salutes, gives order to men; exits. Guards close and fasten gates.*)

OZEM.

(*Gives order to his men; exits, double quick,* L. U.)

MICHAL.

(*At head of palace steps, followed by* LIA, *a waiting maid, comes quickly down the steps, looks off* L.; *calls.*) Lia! Lia! Omez hath returned! Go thou and tell him I would speak with him. (LIA *exits* L. U.; *shouts, battle effect, which is heard throughout the act.*) Oh, those shouts, shouts of agony, and of death; the horror of it hath well nigh made me ill. (*X'ing again to* L.)

OZEM.

(*Enters with six men; halts them at back; comes to about* C.)

MICHAL.

Ozem, what news? Didst thou see David?

OZEM.

(*Speaking quickly, and with military precision.*) I delivered thy message to my brother at Engedi three days ago. I returned yesterday. David doth make the journey on foot and through the woods. He should have arrived outside the city's walls last night. I instructed him to wait till the morning change of guard, and to enter the city by the northern gate where I was on duty.

MICHAL.

But now the city is besieged by the Philistines; he cannot enter.

OZEM.

I was ordered away from that post. Prince Phalti was placed in command. In my extremity I confided all to him.

MICHAL.

What did the Prince say?

OZEM.

He was greatly pleased, and told me to tell thee "That thou had'st saved Israel."

MICHAL.

I—saved—Israel!

OZEM.

He immediately sent away his soldiers and replaced them with those who had served under David.

MICHAL.

I thank thee, Ozem, for what thou hast done. (*Extending her hand.*)

OZEM.

Princess! (*Kneels before her; then goes up to men; guards open gates; he exits.*)

MICHAL.

O God of Israel! Guard the man I love and again deliver thy children from their enemy!

MERAB.

(*Entering from palace.*) Michal!

MICHAL.

Sister! (*Going to her.*)

MERAB.

Hath any messenger arrived to bring us tidings of the night?

MICHAL.

None, dear sister.

MERAB.

The suspense is terrible! We know not even if our father or brother be alive!

MICHAL.

If harm had befallen them, news would have been brought us.

MERAB.

Our father did promise that a messenger should be sent to us at frequent intervals.

MICHAL.

Probably no man could be spared. Even our house-guards have been summoned to do duty—a thing never before heard of. We must be brave, Merab, and pray for success this day, we and every woman of Israel.

(*Shouts heard.*)

MERAB.

Hear that great shout!

MICHAL.

It is the cry of our people—and hath the sound of victory!

MERAB.

From the house-top the conflict is plainly visible. The Philistines have forced our army to the city wall, and outnumber us greatly.

SHAMMAH.

(*Knocks heavily on the gates.*)

MICHAL.

What is that?

SHAMMAH.

(*Outside.*) Open! Open! 'Tis the King!

Business: Guards throw open gates. SAUL *stands without, supported by* SHAMMAH *and a soldier. A couple of soldiers in the rear—they enter.* SAUL *is in a dazed condition; his hair disheveled, a broken javelin in his hand, a wound across his breast.*

MICHAL.

(*At the sight of her father, runs to him.*) Father!

Business: They lead him to about C. MERAB *places a seat for him.*

SHAMMAH.

We found him wounded. It was with difficulty that we did bear him away.

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Enters from palace and comes to back of* SAUL L.)

MICHAL.

(*Kneeling at the* R. *of* SAUL.) Father, open thine eyes. It is thy daughter, Michal!

SAUL.

(*Opening his eyes, and looking about him.*) Michal! What am I doing here? I remember! I must away! No man can be spared! Come, men! rally again and at them! (*Starts up and sinks to his knees.*) O God of Israel! this weakness! (*They assist him to seat again.*)

MICHAL.

Father, we will assist thee to the house, where thou may'st receive the attention thy injuries require.

SAUL.

Nay, child; my injuries are more than of flesh. Out there Israel is making her last stand. 'Tis but a weak one. Despair is in the heart of our people. They no longer fight as of old, nor answer to the rallying call of the trumpet. (*Shouts.*) Hear! Hear! Tell me, children; did'st thou not hear that shout. Is it not the voice of our people?

MERAB.

Aye, father; we heard it once before, and thought it victory.

SAUL.

Then it was not the phantasy of my mind. For, as I sank to the earth, a great shout arose; a rider appeared.

I saw my men desert me and run toward the new comer, and as unconsciousness o'ertook me, I seemed to hear the name—David!

MICHAL.

I pray it be true! Father, I did send a message to David, and did beg him to come. Perhaps even now he may be there with our people, leading them again to victory.

SAUL.

(*Half aside.*) Samuel, thy prophesy is fulfilled. No success attends my efforts. David leads Israel to victory. Thy words, O Prophet—"To-morrow, thou and thy son—(*Suddenly remembering.*) Jonathan! (*To* SHAMMAH.) Hast thou heard aught of Jonathan?

SHAMMAH.

(*Coming before* SAUL; *kneels.*) O King! Thy son is dead!

SAUL.

(*Utters a smothered cry.*) Jonathan! (*Covers face with his hands.*)

MERAB.

(*Moves to* L., *and shows emotion.*)

MICHAL.

Jonathan dead! Oh! (*Head drops on her father's knee.*)

SAUL.

Weep for thy brother, my daughters, but grieve not for me. It is Jehovah's will. I set myself against his prophet. This is my punishment. But I resolved King Saul should never be taken alive. A messenger! Shammah, thou art his brother; bear him this ring; say it is from the King, and that Saul would ask forgiveness of David! Away!

SHAMMAH.

(*Exits through gates.*)

Business: Shouts grow louder, trumpets sound; sound of conflict.

HIGH PRIEST.

O King! let thy servants assist thee to the house. Thou dost need the aid of the physician.

SAUL.

I am past all aid. Thou holy man, stay by me. Let thy prayers intercede for me. (*He is led* L. *by two soldiers, followed by* HIGH PRIEST. MICHAL *and* MERAB *start to follow.* SAUL *turns.*) Nay; remain and receive the news. If it be good, let my daughters bear it to me. (*Exits* L. 2.)

MICHAL.

Lia! Lia! Run to a high place on the castle and tell me what thou seests of the battle. (*Exit* LIA *who reappears on balcony.*) Oh, David, my beloved! come home a victor this day, and I ask no more! Alas! my heart is full of fear! Oh, Jonathan! my brother! my brother! Jonathan! (*Weeps.*)

LIA.

Dear mistress, it looks like an angel had come in the midst of Israel.

MICHAL.

What sayest thou? Looks it like victory for our soldiers? Speak quickly! What seest thou!

LIA.

I see only our own people. There is no enemy in sight.

MICHAL.

Well—well!

LIA.

Coming over the hill I see a great company, and yonder amid a cloud of dust comes a noble soldier on a white horse, and all the soldiers cheer him as he rides.

Shouts: Israel hath triumphed! Praise be to Jehovah! etc.

MICHAL.

Merab! Dost thou hear?

MERAB.

It is the cry of victory!

GUARD.

(*Throws open gates.*)

PHALTI.

(*Enters, followed by a dozen soldiers, all shouting:* "Israel hath triumphed!") O daughters of Saul! I bear glad tidings! Israel hath conquered! Our enemy hath been put to flight!

(*Shouts off* R.: "Long live David! David!")

MERAB.

I will go to my father. (*Starts.*)

PHALTI.

Tell the King, David hath received his ring, and returns to serve him as of old.

MERAB.

(*Exits in palace.*)

MICHAL.

Oh, the glorious news! (*Starts as though to follow* MERAB.)

PHALTI.

Princess Michal, stay thou and welcome David. When Ozem told me that David was to arrive, I gathered together all the men who had served under him, and when they saw David, with a great cry of joy they rushed toward him. Soon he was placed at their head. The news spread throughout our ranks. The battle cry became "David, the slayer of the Philistine, is with us!" Our defeat was turned to victory!

(*Shouts become louder.* David! David! We will have no other leader! etc.)

Business: The trumpets sound. Soldiers who came on with PHALTI *take up the shouts. From the palace, enter all extra women, waving branches and singing,* "Welcome, David." *Soldiers come on through gates from* R. *and form semi-circle about* R. *of stage. Great shouting and blasts from instruments as* DAVID *enters.* HIGH PRIEST *enters on steps.*

DAVID.

(*Enters on horse. Halts* C., *facing palace. Raises his hand for silence. To armor-bearer by his side.*) Convey to the King the tidings that his people have again triumphed over their enemies, the Philistines; and that David, his servant, would do homage to Saul, King of Israël! (DAVID *dismounts.*)

OMNES.

Long live David! David!

HIGH PRIEST.

King Saul is dead!

OMNES.

(*Remove helmets.* DAVID *kneels.*)

MICHAL.

(*Gives cry of sorrow.*)

DAVID.

(*Goes to her, takes her in his arms.*)

HIGH PRIEST.

(*To* PRIEST.) Bring forth the crown. Men of Israel! Thy King! Whom shall he be?

OMNES.

Long live King David! God save the King! We'll have no King but David!

PRIEST.

(*Enters with crown, hands it to* HIGH PRIEST. *Business.*

(*As picture is formed, all take up the song, which continues to the end, after curtain is down.*)

SLOW CURTAIN.

JAN 21 1904

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